



Master of Arts in Counseling

Course Syllabus

Course Information

COUN627 - MARRIAGE & FAMILY COUNSELING
Fall 2024
3 Semester Hours

Location/Date/Time

SB003
Tuesday, 12:30 - 3:30 PM

INSTRUCTOR'S INFORMATION:

Jennifer Cline, PhD, LPC

Email: jennifer.cline@emu.edu

Office Phone: 540.432.4213

Student Hours: **Greet:** A 5-10 minute "pop-in" whenever my office door is open to say "hi" and connect

Meet: A 15-30 minute scheduled meeting for advising or to discuss an issue

Work: A longer scheduled meeting to engage in parallel or collaborative worktime

adapted from Hogan & Sathy, 2022, Inclusive teaching: Strategies for promoting equity in the college classroom

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides an overview of relational counseling from a systems perspective. A survey of the predominant systems theories essential in working with couples and families will be presented. Special emphasis is given to evidence-based treatments and the current research on attachment theory and the role of attachment in couple and family distress. Students will become familiar with attachment issues, working from an emotion focused perspective and gain proficiency in assessment and intervention. Each student will construct a personal family genogram and engage in analyzing their family using a systems approach and use case conceptualization and treatment planning from various theories.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a systems perspective as it relates to couple and family therapy (CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1., 5.C.1., 5.F.1., and 5.F.7.-8.).
2. Students will gain awareness of key systems concepts in marriage and family counseling (CACREP 2024, 5.F.7.-8., and 5.F.10.-11.).
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of various systems theories and theory-specific interventions for working with couples and families (CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1., 5.F.7.-8., and 5.F.10.-11.).
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the role of attachment theory in couple and family counseling (CACREP 2024, 3.C.6., 5.F.3., 5.F.7., and 5.F.11.).
5. Students will gain awareness of models of resilience, optimal development, and wellness in families (CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.C.7., and 3.C.12.).
6. Students will engage in experiential learning exercises that apply specific family assessments, including genograms and family mapping (CACREP 2024, 3.C.13., 5.F.2., 5.F.4.-6., and 5.F.9.).
7. Students will engage in experiential learning exercises that apply specific family and couple techniques and interventions (CACREP 2024, 3.E.10., 3.E.13., 3.E.15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., and 5.F.10.-11.).
8. Students will become aware of legal and ethical issues that impact therapy with couples and families (CACREP 2024, 3.E.6., 5.C.6., 5.C.9., 5.F.3., and 5.F.12.-14.).
9. Students will address issues of diversity and how these differences impact their work with couple and family issues (CACREP 2024, 3.E.7.-8., 3.E.11, 5.F.2., and 5.F.4.-6.).
10. Students will practice case conceptualization, treatment planning, and clinical case documentation with various systems theories (CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1.-2., 3.E.9.-10., 3.E.12.-16., 5.C.1.-2., 5.C.4.-5., and 5.F.1.-12.).

COURSE FORMAT:

Sessions will emphasize lecture, discussion, experiential exercises, and opportunities for applied learning. Course evaluation will be based on class participation, readings, and assignments. This class is student-centered, so active participation is crucial, which means **all required reading must be completed before class**.

SYLLABUS DISCLAIMER:

This syllabus is not a contract. The instructor reserves the right to alter the course requirements, schedule, and/or assignments based on new materials, class discussions, or other legitimate objectives. Students will be given notice of relevant changes in class or via e-mail.

TECHNOLOGY:

The EMU MA in Counseling program, in accordance with a national professional conversation about the use of technology in counselor education, is supporting a return to engagement and paper notebooks. As we are in the profession of presence and attunement, we want to be intentional about how we address this in our classes. Therefore, we will ask that you keep your phone and your computer/iPad in your bag, unless you are required to use it in class. We have been reading and researching about the impact of technology on the brain related to social engagement and learning, in addition to the strong correlation between writing and learning. We wish to promote an embodied learning and discovery experience and can only be successful to do so in a context that minimizes disruption and interruption. We recognize there will be times when access to a phone is necessary and want to encourage advanced planning and communication with faculty.

PREREQUISITES:

N/A

REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER RESOURCES:

Gehart, D. (2024). *Mastering competencies in family therapy: A practical approach to theories and clinical case documentation* (4th ed.). Cengage.

Johnson, S. M. (2020). *The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Movie: *I Like it Like That* (1994) starring Laura Valdez and John Seda; you can rent from Amazon for \$3.99.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Beeton, T. A. & Clark, R. A. (2019). *Assessing family relationships: A family life space drawing manual*. Routledge.

Ferrer, J. N. (2022). *Love and freedom: Transcending monogamy and polyamory*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Gottman, J. S. & Gottman, J. M. (2015). *Ten principles for doing effective couples' therapy*. New York, NY: Random House.

Hanna, S. (2018). *The practice of family therapy: Key elements across models*, 5th ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson.

Johnson, S. M., Bradley, B. A., Furrow, J., Lee, A., Palmer, G., Tilley, D., & Wooley, S. (2005). *Becoming an emotionally focused couple therapist: A workbook*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Jongsma, A. & Dattilio, F. (2014). *The family treatment planner, with DSM-5 updates*, 2nd ed. New York, NY: John Wiley.

Menakem, R. (2023). *Monsters in love: Why your partner sometimes drives you crazy and what you can do about it*. Central Recovery Press.

McGoldrick, M. & Gerson, R. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention*, 3rd ed. New York, NY: W.W. Norton.

- McGoldrick, M., Giordana, J., & Garcia-Preto, N., eds. (2005). *Ethnicity and family therapy*, 3rd ed. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- McGoldrick, M., Garcia-Preto, N., & Carter, B. (2015). *The expanding family life cycle: Individual, family and social perspectives*, 5th ed. New York, NY: Pearson.
- Minuchin, S., Nichols, M., & Lee, W. (2007). *Assessing families and couples: From symptom to system*. Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- Minuchin, S. & Fishman, H. C. (1981). *Family therapy techniques*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Prep.
- Minuchin, S., Lee, W., & Simon, G. (2006). *Mastering family therapy: Journeys of growth and transformation*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Nagoski, E. (2021). *Come as you are: The surprising new science that will transform your sex life*. Simon & Schuster.
- Napier, A. & Whitaker, C. (1978). *The family crucible: The intense experience of family therapy*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Perel, E. (2007). *Mating in captivity: Unlocking erotic intelligence*. Harper Perennial.
- Schnarch, D. (2011). *Intimacy and desire: Awaken the passion in your relationship*. Beaufort Books.
- Sherman, R. & Fredman, N. (1986). *Handbook of structured techniques in marriage and family therapy*. Levittown, PA: Bruner Mazel Publishing.
- Taibbi, R. (2015). *Doing family therapy: Craft and creativity in clinical practice*, 3rd ed. New York, NY: Guilford Publications.
- Vaughan, M. D. & Burnes, T. R., eds (2022). *The handbook of consensual non-monogamy affirming mental health practice*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Worden, M. (2007). *Family therapy basics*, 3rd edition. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

SCHEDULE AND TOPICS:

G=Gehart text; J=Johnson text

Please have all readings completed by the day listed on the syllabus.

Date	Subject	Reading/Assignments Due
Week 1: 8/27/24	Introduction to course <i>CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1.-2., 5.C.1., 5.F.1., and 5.F.7.-9.</i>	
Week 2: 9/03/24	Theoretical Foundations <i>CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.C.7., 3.C.12-13., 3.E.1.-2., 3.E.6.-15., 5.C.1.-2., 5.C.4.-6., 5.C.9, 5.F.1., and 5.F.4.-15.</i>	Read G Ch. 1-3 and on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Putting the family back in family therapy</i>, • <i>Doing family: Decentering heteronormativity</i>, • <i>Consensually non-monogamous families and their children</i>, and • <i>Families in flux</i> article
Week 3: 9/10/24	Introduction to Case & Deliverables; Established schools: Psychodynamic Approaches <i>CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1.-2. and 5.F.4.-11.</i>	Read G Ch. 4-5, 9, and on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The critical genogram</i> article, and • <i>Genograms</i> by McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry, Chapters 2 & 4; Due: Watch film and complete first two pages of the Linares Family Worksheet In Class: Apply theory to the Linares Family
Week 4: 9/17/24	Established schools: Transgenerational Approaches <i>CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1.-2. and 5.F.4.-11.</i>	Read on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assessing interpersonal fusion</i> article, • <i>4 Points of balance</i> handout, and • <i>Monsters in Love</i>, by Menakem, Chapters 3 & 4 Watch on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bowen lecture (32 min.) Bring to class your completed "Differentiation of Self" Scale In Class: Apply theory to the Linares Family
Week 5: 9/24/24	Established schools: Systemic-Strategic Approaches <i>CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1., and 5.F.7.-11.</i>	Read G Ch. 6 and on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Interventive interviewing, parts I - III</i> articles Watch on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic, part I lecture (80 min.) • Strategic, part II lecture (55 min.) In Class: Apply theory to the Linares Family
Week 6: 10/01/24	Established schools: Structural Approaches	Read G Ch. 7 Watch on Moodle:

	CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1., and 5.F.7.-11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural lecture (44 min.) In Class: Apply theory to the Linares Family
Week 7: 10/08/24	Established schools: Experiential/EFT and Cognitive-Behavioral/Mindfulness Approaches CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.C.6., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1., and 5.F.7.-11.	Read G Ch. 8 & 10 and on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ten Principles for Doing Effective Couples Therapy</i> by Gottman & Gottman, Chapter 1 Watch on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satir lecture (38 min.) CBT lecture (57 min.) In Class: Apply theory to the Linares Family
Week 8: 10/15/24	Family Therapy in the 21 st Century: Solution-based Approaches CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1., and 5.F.7.-11.	Read G Ch. 11 Watch on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solution-focused lecture (80 min.) In Class: Apply theory to the Linares Family
Week 9: 10/22/24	Family Therapy in the 21 st Century: Collaborative/Narrative Approaches CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1., and 5.F.7.-11.	Read G Ch. 12 Watch on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrative lecture (58 min.) In Class: Apply theory to the Linares Family At the end of class: Linares Family Worksheet Due
Week 10: 10/29/24	Documentation: Case Conceptualization & Assessment CACREP 2024, 3.C.7., 3.C.12.-13., 3.E.2.-3., 3.E.16., 5.C.2., 5.C.4., 5.C.6., 5.C.9., 5.F.2., 5.F.4.-6., 5.F.8.-9., and 5.F.11.-14.	Read G Ch. 13 & 14 and on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A systemically infused integrative model for conceptualizing couple problems</i> article Genogram and Analysis Due In class: Present genograms
Week 11: 11/05/24	Election Day: Asynchronous Class Materials Evaluation: Comparative Analysis and Research CACREP 2024, 3.E.2., 3.E.14.-15., and 5.F.8.-9.	Read on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The effectiveness and efficacy of marital and family therapy</i> and <i>Research on the treatment of couple distress</i> articles
Week 12: 11/12/24	Documentation: Treatment Planning, Evaluating Progress, & Progress Notes CACREP 2024, 3.C.7., 3.C.12.-13., 3.E.2., 3.E.10., 3.E.12.-16., 5.C.2., 5.C.4.-6., 5.C.9., 5.F.2., 5.F.8., and 5.F.10.-14.	Read G Ch. 15-17 In class: Workshop case conceptualizations
Week 13: 11/19/24	Introduction to EFT & EFT basics CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.C.6., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-12., 5.C.1., 5.F.1., and 5.F.7.	Read J Ch. 1-5 and on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The new era of couple therapy</i> article Watch on Moodle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EFT lecture (41 min.) Case Conceptualizations Due
11/26/24	Thanksgiving - Off	
Week 14: 12/03/24	EFT Stage 1: Assessment and de-escalation CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.C.6., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.6.-15., 5.C.1.-2., 5.C.4.-6., 5.C.9., 5.F.1., 5.F.3., 5.F.7.-11., and 5.F.13.-14.	Read J Ch. 6 & 7
Week 15: 12/10/24	EFT Stage 2: Engagement CACREP 2024, 3.C.1., 3.C.6., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-11., 3.E.13., 3.E.15., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1., 5.F.7., and 5.F.10.-11.	Read J Ch. 8-10; Skim J. Ch. 11-15

Please Note: The above schedule and procedures for this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances

GRADING & BREAKDOWN OF EVALUATION:

A = 315-350 points B = 280-314 points C = 245-279 points

Classroom Participation	50	} 350 points possible
Family Case Conceptualization	100	
Applied Work Assignments	100	
Family Genogram & Analysis	100	

ASSIGNMENTS:

Classroom Participation (50 points): In this class we will learn from one another. It is important that everyone participate meaningfully in all class activities and discussion in order for the class to gain a richer understanding of the diversity of experiences and in order to gain greater insight and perspective. Mutual respect, honesty and authenticity are all highly valued in this course. Part of being respectful to one-another is being on time, attending regularly, and maintaining one another's confidences as we share our own experiences. **Please plan to leave your cell phones and your laptops turned off** as texting or attending to social media is not conducive to classroom participation. Your full participation is requested. You are expected to demonstrate a professional attitude and participate in a way that is respectful of yourself and others.

During this course, as a student, a future counselor, and as a person, you will be exposed to various sensitive/challenging topics, discussions, videos and other material that will require you to do some personal exploration/evaluation. You are also encouraged to share your personal views and experiences with class/group members, and disclose some personal information if you wish to do so. Your contributions may involve personal challenge and risk, may create discomfort and a sense of vulnerability. In essence, there is risk involved in being a class/group member. It is the same risk and vulnerability that I as the facilitator will embrace as a member of this class. I see this personal exploration and process as an essential component of your education and your personal growth and also recognize the potential for others to grow as professionals and as human beings.

I have chosen the materials, speakers, texts, and readings for this course very carefully and professionally. However, I cannot control who will be personally offended or uncomfortable with what is presented. If you feel any discomfort, you may always bring it up to the group to be evaluated or with me outside of class. You may also choose to stay silent or leave the classroom environment. However, I encourage you to evaluate your discomfort and face the challenging issues for your personal and/or professional growth. Practicing being immediate has the potential to enlighten those around you, as well as yourself, in addition to informing your future work as a clinician.

The following rubric will be used to evaluate your class participation:

Excellent	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Consistently engages, actively listens, and builds on the contributions of other members of the class. Arrives promptly and fully prepared at every class session. Can always be counted on to offer honest reflections, insightful observations, and empathic comments that contribute significantly to a stimulating learning environment. Welcomes feedback and brings a sense of presence	Attends every class, arrives promptly, and is well prepared, having completed all assignments. Interacts respectfully and empathically with other members of the class. Regularly contributes thoughtful reflections, relevant comments, and constructive observations to class discussions. Is open to feedback and brings a sense of presence that contributes to productive group dynamics.	Is absent or, when present, rarely interacts with other members of the class. Comes to class unprepared. Demonstrates a notable lack of interest in contributing to a positive learning environment. Brings a presence that sabotages productive group dynamics. Engages in non-verbal relational aggression, such as eye rolling and dismissive gestures that communicates disrespect or

that stimulates productive group dynamics without dominating.		contempt for peers and the instructor.
---	--	--

Linares Family Case Conceptualization and Treatment Plan for a “I Like it Like That” (100 points); Assesses the following CACREP standards: 3.C.1, 3.C.6.-7., 3.C.12.-13., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.6.-16., 5.C.1.-2., 5.C.4.-6., 5.C.9., and 5.F.1.-14.; **Due 11/19/24:** This assignment is aimed at helping you to apply important concepts of MFT to a hypothetical family case. We will use the family in the movie: *I Like It Like That* as our case example. You should assume that the parents of the preadolescent boy in the family case (“Little C”) made an appointment with you to address concerns about his behaviors. You will be providing treatment from a systems perspective.

To begin, view the movie as often as needed, but **at least twice**, and pay close attention to the social, emotional, and behavioral dynamics in the immediate and extended family, and also in the couple relationship. Principles we discuss in class, in texts, and other materials will guide your observations.

On the due date, submit one 10-page paper along with a cover page; the cover page is not included in the page limit. The paper should be double-spaced, APA style (version 7, student) with references where appropriate.

Please use each underlined term below as subheadings in writing up the conceptualization, which includes a summary of the family’s clinical history, your hypotheses and diagnoses, and treatment recommendations. Under each subheading your comments should be detailed and informative but succinct.

Part 1: Clinical History

- Construct a one-page, three-generation genogram of the family based on characters/information in the movie. We do not know some names so use “roles” (e.g., grandfather) as a designation.
- Provide a detailed introduction to the Linares family and significant others.
- “Little C” is the identified client; describe the presenting concern that brings him to therapy.
- Provide a succinct description of the Linares family background, including trauma, substance use issues, recent/salient events, and relevant history.
- Discuss the family's life cycle stage and how the stage of development may be related to its functioning; summarize how Little C’s stage of development may be impacting his conduct and/or influence his caregivers.
- Discuss the impact on the family’s structure on child/family functioning. (Note: The term structure as used here is based on concepts of structural FT—e.g., hierarchy, subsystems, boundaries, triangles, coalitions, rules, complementary patterns, etc.). Review class materials on family structure to discuss this aspect.
- Discuss the influence(s) of intergenerational dynamic(s) on child/family relationships.
- Describe the family’s strengths and resources focusing both on individuals’ strengths/resources and then on the system.
- Discuss the impact of race/ethnicity, socioeconomics, and gender role dynamics on child/family. Discuss how the larger system or contextual factors that may be affecting the family.
- Describe the dominant discourses and how they shape the families’ understanding of the problem as well as unique outcomes.

Part 2: Conceptualization (i.e. “The Viewing”)

- List three hypotheses about how family dynamics (as you describe above) may be contributing to Little C’s conduct. Hypotheses must be systemic (i.e., not just individually focused) and based upon one or more specific models of family therapy and focused on any system-level child, couple, extended family, etc.
- Speculate on what diagnosis you might give Little C as the “client.” You might also speculate on whether diagnoses are warranted for any others in the primary family. Do not worry about using DSM diagnostic codes; just use descriptors (e.g., anxiety, depression).

Part 3: Treatment Recommendations (i.e. “The Doing”)

- Based on your hypotheses above, formulate three treatment objectives that inform family-based therapy as well as specific interventions you would use to meet those goals (be sure to tie your objectives and interventions with a theory-based rationale).

- Provide three indicators of change that you will look for to understand how child/family dynamics are improving.

On Moodle, you can access a thorough scoring rubric which will be used to evaluate your Linares Family Case Conceptualization. You are encouraged to evaluate yourself on this rubric and turn your self-evaluation in with your final paper.

Small Group Work: Applied Work Assignments for the Linares Family (100 points); *Assesses the following CACREP standards: 3.C.1, 3.C.6.-7., 3.C.12.-13., 3.E.1.-3., 3.E.7.-16., 5.C.1., 5.C.5., 5.F.1.-2., and 5.F.4.-11.*

This assignment is designed for you to practice applying your understanding of the various models of family therapy to the Linares family's situation. Ultimately, this applied work will assist you in writing your Case Conceptualization and Treatment Plan as it will help you organize your preliminary thoughts and refine your conceptualization. This worksheet will be completed in small groups and your grade will be based on your effort and thoroughness rather than the "rightness" of each answer as this is an opportunity to practice and refine your understanding rather than demonstration of mastery.

On Moodle, you can access the "Linares Family Worksheet"

- Prior to class on 9/10/24, watch "I like it like that" and complete the following worksheet sections:
 - Introduction to the client and significant others
 - Presenting concern
 - Background Information
- As the semester progresses, there will be time in each class for your small group to meet and complete the section covered in that day's class.
- One worksheet (for the entire small group) will be due in its entirety after class on **10/22/24**.

Family Genogram and Analysis (100 points); *This assignment is your marriage and family competency assignment and should be placed in your competency portfolio and it assesses the following CACREP standards: 3.C.1, 3.C.6.-7., 3.C.12.-13., 3.E.1.-2, and 5.F.1.-9; Due 10/29/24:* This assignment is aimed at promoting deep insights about your own family system based on learning in the course. This will greatly enhance your capacity for a reflective mental health practice (e.g., managing "triggers" and "countertransference" that often occur in family and couple work). There are three parts to this assignment. First, construct a genogram reflecting at least four generations of your family including the cultural context. We will fully explore use of this intervention in class. Second, use readings, class discussions, and the assignment guide as resources to analysis your genogram. Third, write a one-page reflection paper about doing the assignment. I will be the only person with access to your analysis (although you will share your genogram and one salient observation from the assignment with the class on the due date) and I will hold your information in the strictest confidence. We will discuss and practice many elements in class that will help you to complete this assignment.

The Genogram

Construct a genogram reflecting at least four generations of your family of origin, and if relevant, your family of procreation. The genogram should visually document your family constellation and provide some information about family members.

- Clearly identify yourself within the depiction.
- Include some basic demographic information about individuals (e.g., age, ethnic/cultural origin, marriage/divorce, death) and any other information you believe is useful to understanding your family system (e.g., occupations, education, religious background, and financial standing as well as medical or psychological problems, substance use or abuse, and legal struggles).
 - Use these resources as needed as guides:
 - Genogram class handouts,
 - Moodle article: *Genograms* by McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry, Chapters 2 & 4, and
 - This electronic source for creating genograms: <http://www.genopro.com/>. There is a trial offer that might be useful. There is a student-created document on Moodle that explains how to print off your electronic genogram.
- Identify the cultural events relevant for the eras of each generation, how your family experienced or was impacted by those events, and the resulting effects of oppression and privilege most salient to your family and include them on your basic genogram.

- Use these resources as needed as guides:
 - Moodle article: *Critical genogram* by Kosutic et al, and
 - Moodle handout: Critical genogram information and resources
- Do begin **now** to gather relevant information from family members to construct the genogram. There are also free ancestry search engines available on-line that may help you “fill in” some missing gaps. **See attached appendix, the McGoldrick et al. chapters, and the Developmental Interview questions on Moodle for suggestions regarding “relevant information” to gather.**

Analysis

You can convey the analysis of your genogram, including its relational/familial connections and dynamics along with the influence of social location in *one of two ways*:

- You can develop a ten-page written analysis; the paper must be written in APA style with a cover page for a total of 11 pages (including your reflection); OR
- You can take me on a video tour of your genogram; the video must be at least 45 minutes and no more than 1 hour in length along with your one page written reflection.

Regardless of the method that you choose, you should begin by introducing your family and providing context for the reader/observer; then address the following in a free-flowing essay/recording, addressing *what is most salient in your family story*, including but not limited to:

- The family life cycle including significant transitions, events, developmental tasks, and derailments
- The family’s structure (Note: The term structure as used here is based on concepts of structural FT—e.g., hierarchy, subsystems, boundaries, triangles, coalitions, rules, roles)
- The influence(s) of intergenerational dynamic(s) including pattern repetition across generations and generational boundaries
- Core family cognitions (e.g., predominate beliefs, values, and family myths) and the family “narrative”
- The family’s communication, problem solving and conflict resolution patterns
- What is the emotional climate? How does the family manage intimacy and separateness? How does the family navigate conflict?
- Effects of cultural dynamics (race, gender, religion, and class, etc. on the family system)
- Family supports, strengths, and resilience

On Moodle, you can access a thorough scoring rubric which will be used to evaluate your Family Genogram and Analysis. You are encouraged to evaluate yourself on this rubric and turn your self-evaluation in with your final paper/recording.

DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES:

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This class will abide by program standards for attendance. Students should notify the professor PRIOR to the class if they are unable to attend a scheduled class. The student is responsible for gathering material that is missed due to an absence. More than two absences per semester will result failing the course.

GRADING CRITERIA

The Master of Arts in Counseling faculty support students in actively engaging their academic and applied work throughout their training, valuing this as a core professionalism skill. Students should be aware that graduate university policy allows two C grades before being dismissed from the program.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

ACADEMIC PROGRAM POLICIES

For EMU graduate program policies, please see the complete [graduate catalog](#).

The Graduate and Seminary [Student Handbook](#) contains policies, information, and resources. This section of the syllabus highlights several key items.

CLASSROOM CULTURE & RELATED POLICIES

EMU's [Life Together](#) statement describes the sort of learning community that we aspire to be. Learning thrives where there is free and open exchange of ideas, thoughts, emotions, and convictions. Open discourse requires trust and safety. While I anticipate that you may find that some aspects of the class challenge your views and theoretical frameworks, I invite you to respectfully express either agreement or disagreement without fear of consequences. If you feel that I am violating this commitment, please make an appointment to meet outside of class so that we can discuss the issue.

I hope we can welcome differences and demonstrate a willingness to analyze issues from frameworks that may or may not feel comfortable. I have opinions, which I may express from time to time. Please be sensitive in your class participation by not unfairly dominating discussions. Be aware of others' right to speak and welcome questions from your classmates. My goal is to create a brave space in which everyone learns to participate in scholarly dialogue that values listening, thinking, feeling, study, and professionalism. (*Adapted from Margaret Saltee and Kathryn Roulston*)

1. Our primary commitment is to learn from each other. We will listen to each other and not talk at each other. We welcome differences amongst us in backgrounds, skills, interests, and values. We realize that it is these very differences that will increase our awareness and understanding through this process.
2. We will trust that people are always doing the best they can.
3. Challenge the idea and not the person. We debate ideas, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.
4. Each of us will strive to speak our discomfort. When something is bothering you, please practice sharing this with the group. Often our emotional reactions offer valuable learning opportunities.
5. Step Up, Step Back. Be mindful of taking up much more space than others. On the same note, empower yourself to speak up when others are dominating the conversation.
6. Stay engaged. When overwhelmed or stressed, it can be tempting to slip away from the class or group while meeting. Let us honor one another with focused connection. When we catch ourselves disengaging, let us gently refocus on the tasks at hand.

INCLUSIVE, COMMUNITY-CREATING LANGUAGE POLICY

EMU is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive, safe, supportive educational environment that fosters respect for others and is free from intolerance directed toward individuals or groups. As such, EMU expects all its faculty, staff, and students to adopt inclusive written and spoken language that welcomes everyone regardless of race or ethnicity, religious identity, gender, disabilities, age, and sexual orientation. We will strive to use respectful and welcoming language in our classrooms.

As an inclusive community, we strive to sustain safety and belonging for students of all gender and sexual identities expressed in the [LGBTQIA+ Student Support Policy](#).

BIAS RESPONSE

Bias incidents are harmful to the EMU community and/or individuals within the EMU community. Bias can be intentional or unintentional and may be directed toward an individual or group. A bias incident may take the form of a verbal interaction, cyber-interaction, physical interaction, or interaction with property. Bias reporting is a resource for anyone who needs to communicate an incident or explore a better understanding around issues of discrimination and learning how to effectively respond. All members of the university community are encouraged to [report](#) incidents of bias.

ATTENDANCE POLICY & LEARNING ENGAGEMENT (*see program specific guidelines)

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. If unusual or emergency circumstances prevent class attendance, the student should notify the professor in advance if possible. If a student misses 2 class periods, they are expected to write a 1-page reflection paper on the content missed (drawing from class readings, resources on Moodle, and conversations with classmates). A third missed class may result in failing the course. The student is responsible for the material presented in classes missed. Students should be aware of the importance of regular class attendance, particularly in the case of classes that only meet once a week or over several weekends. Being absent for more than one class leads to a student missing a large portion of the

class content. In addition to consistent class attendance, students should make every effort to arrive to class on time out of respect for the learning process, fellow students and faculty.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

EMU respects the diversity of religious holidays and wishes to provide reasonable accommodations for students who may be unable to fully participate in class, lab, exams, or other assignments due to observation of a significant religious holiday. Students should provide adequate notice (a week in advance) to the faculty of such requests.

COURSE EXTENSIONS AND OUTSTANDING GRADES

For fall and spring semesters, all coursework is due by the end of the semester. If a student will not be able to complete a course on time, the student must submit a request one week before the end of the semester for an extension (up to 6 months), by emailing the instructor, academic advisor and the Academic Program Coordinator. If the request is granted the student will receive an "I (incomplete) for the course which will later be replaced by a final grade when the work has been turned in on the agreed upon date. If the request for an extension is denied, the student will receive a grade for the work that has been completed up until the time the course was expected to have been completed. If no work has been submitted, the final grade will be an F (or W under unusual circumstances and with permission of the Program Director). Extensions will be given only for legitimate and unusual situations. Extensions are contracted by the student with the program for up to a maximum of 6 months after the deadline for the course work. *PLEASE NOTE: Grades for coursework submitted late may be reduced at the instructor's discretion and in line with their course policy on turning in coursework after the due date. If the extension deadline is not met, the instructor will submit the final grade based on what has been received to date.*

WRITING GUIDELINES

EMU has adopted a set of writing [guidelines](#) for graduate programs that include six sets of criteria: content, structure, rhetoric and style, information literacy, source integrity, and conventions.

GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES WRITING CENTER

Please utilize the [writing program](#)! They offer free individual tutoring from a [graduate writing](#) coach. Please visit the website to schedule an appointment.

ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY & INTEGRITY

In accordance with EMU mission, vision, and life together statements, we expect academic integrity of all members of the community. Responses to violations of academic integrity will be handled according to the [Academic Accountability Policy and Procedures](#). EMU fosters a culture where faculty, staff, and students respect themselves and others. EMU faculty and staff care about the integrity of their own work and the work of their students. They create assignments that promote interpretative thinking and work intentionally with students during the learning process. Honesty, integrity, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility are characteristics of a community that is active in loving mercy, doing justice, and walking humbly before God. At EMU, a transparent account for academic work involves producing and submitting one's own work in papers, essays, projects, quizzes and tests; correctly and consistently acknowledging sources used; factually representing research results, one's credentials, and facts or opinions; and appropriately documenting use of technology.

MOODLE

[Moodle](#) is the online learning platform that EMU has chosen to provide to faculty, administrators and students. Students will have access to course information within Moodle for any class they are registered for in a given term. The amount of time a student has access to information before and after the class is somewhat dependent on the access given to students by the individual faculty member. However, please note that courses are not in Moodle permanently – after two years the class will no longer be accessible. Please be sure to download resources from Moodle that you wish to have ongoing access to.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND COMMUNICATION

Communication will largely be accomplished via the Moodle platform utilized by EMU and your EMU email. Check both frequently during the semester.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

All research conducted by or on EMU faculty, staff, or students must be reviewed by the [Institutional Review Board](#) to assure participant safety.

LIBRARY

The [Hartzler Library](#) offers research support (via email, chat, phone, or SSC campus). The library home page offers subject guides to help start your research.

DISABILITY RESOURCES

EMU seeks to meet the needs of all admitted students. We are committed to provide both physical and programmatic access with reasonable accommodations for all qualified documented students who are served through the Office of Academic Access. Our policies for students with disabilities are consistent with the necessity of ensuring reasonable accommodations under federal law, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the 2008 ADA Amendments Act.

If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your work in this course, it is your responsibility to contact the [Office of Academic Access](#) on the third floor of the Hartzler library. This office will work with you to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. All information and documentation is treated confidentially. To request services, use the [online request form](#) or call the coordinator of the Office of Academic Access at (540) 432-4638.

TITLE IX

*The following policy applies to any incidents that occur (on or off campus) while you are a student registered at EMU. It does not apply to incidents that happened **prior to your enrollment at EMU**.*

It is important for you to know that all faculty and staff members are required to report known or alleged incidents of sexual violence (including sexual assault, domestic/relationship violence, stalking). That means that faculty and staff members cannot keep information about sexual violence confidential if you share that information with them. For example, if you inform a faculty or staff member of an issue of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or discrimination, they will keep the information as private as possible. However, they are required to bring it to the attention of the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to talk to the Title IX Coordinator (Kimberly Anderson, JD) directly, she can be reached at 540-432-4849 (4TIX) or titleixcoordinator@emu.edu. You can also report incidents or complaints through the [online portal](#). You may confidentially report incidents of sexual violence if you speak to Counseling Services counselors, University Chaplain and Seminary Campus Pastor, or Health Services personnel providing clinical care. These individuals, as well as the Title IX Coordinator, can provide you with information on both internal and external support resources.

APPENDIX: FAMILY GENOGRAM, “RELEVANT INFORMATION” GUIDELINE
FROM ANNE STEWART’S MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COURSE, JMU, 1999

SAMPLE

Hey!

Now before Dad goes and says, "The only time we get a letter from the girl is when she wants something.", I will plead guilty. However, I do want to point out that my writing these questions in a letter is easier than me dictating them to you over the phone.

Hopefully, before you get this letter, we will have talked on the phone, and I will have told you that these questions are for my assignment in my *Marriage and Family Systems* class. I'm going to list a bunch of questions. Some answers I may already know, some only part, and some none at all. Mainly, I want to hear your perspective. Tell me how you saw things, and tell me stories which you don't think I remember or have heard. **YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER ALL THESE QUESTIONS!!** You can pick and choose which ones you want to answer.

The list of questions was put together by someone else—not me. It's kinda formal, so try to ignore the tone. Here goes. . .

- Any other tidbits from your courtship?
- How did your mother and father meet?
- What roles have outside people played in the family? Who?
- Has anyone else lived with the family? Yours or ours?
- What is the family's relationship to the community?
- How did the various family members react when a particular child was born? Who was named after whom?
- How did the various family members react when a particular family member died? Who took it the hardest? Who took it easiest? Who wasn't there?
- Family moves and migrations. How were they handled by the family?
- When and why did the family migrate to this country? How well did the initial generation fare? Which members of the immigrant generation learned the language?
- Are there any family members who do not speak to each other or who have ever had a period of not speaking? Are there any who were/are in serious conflict?
- Are there any family members who were/are extremely close? Who helps out when help is needed? In whom do family members confide?
- All couples have some sort of marital difficulties. What sorts of problems and conflicts have you encountered? What about your parents' and siblings' marriages?
- How do you get along with each child? Have any family members had particular problems in dealing with their children? What about your parents? What about your siblings?
- Has any family member been focused as the caretaker? The problematic one? The "sick" one? The "bad" one? The "mad" one? What about your parents? What about your siblings?

- Who in the family is seen as the strong one? The weak one? The dominant one? The submissive one? What about your parents? What about your siblings?
- Who in the family is seen as the successful one? The failure? What about your parents? What about your siblings?
- Who is seen as warm? As cold? As caring? As distant? What about your parents? What about your siblings?
- What are some labels or nicknames that you would assign to "us" children? What about your parents? What about your siblings?
- How do you think your brothers/sisters would describe you?
- Has anyone in the family had a serious medical or psychological problem? Been depressed? Had anxieties? Fears? Lost control? What about your relatives?
- Has there been any physical or sexual abuse by any family members? Are there any other problems that worry you?
- Has there been any long term unemployment (hmmm)? How have you liked your jobs? What about your parents? What about your siblings?
- How does the economic situation compare with that of your relatives or family of origin?
- Do any family members routinely use medication?
- Do you think any members drink too much or have a drug problem? Has anyone else ever thought so? What drugs? How does the family handle it?
- Have any family members ever been arrested? For what? What was the result?
- Stories from when Michael and I were younger.
- How do you think your family of origin influenced how you raised your own family? *****

If you only answer one of these questions, I would prefer it be the last one. I realize that we don't talk about many of these issues—YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER ANYTHING YOU DON'T WANT TO. By asking these questions, I just want to understand the family better and how we all got to be how we are. I don't intend to use your answers to start labeling people or pointing fingers. (even though some of the questions seem that way). Do them separately or collaborate? But let me know who is responding to which ones? The boys are welcome to participate if they are interested.

I also enclosed a letter that I sent to the relatives: Aunt Peggy & Uncle Dwight, Uncle John, Uncle Tom (?), Aunt LaVerne, Aunt Marthanne, and Aunt Peggy Radell.

I can't think of what else I was going to say so I'll close. Talk to you soon.

Hi Everyone!

Surprise!! A letter from your niece in Virginia. . . and a form letter to boot. I'm sure most of you are suspicious and figure that I must want something. I'm sorry to say that you are right, so I'll get straight to the point. I DO NEED YOUR HELP.

As most of you know, I am in graduate school at James Madison University pursuing a degree in counseling. This is my second year of course work and then I have a year-long internship before I graduate. Overall, I like the program, but more than that I LOVE being a student. If I could find a way to finance it, I would definitely become a professional student. Hopefully, this will not be my last degree.

This semester I am working on my thesis which focuses on self-esteem issues with adolescent girls and the impact of gender stereotypes. I am also taking three classes—which brings me to the point. One of these classes is called *Marriage and Family Systems*. As part of the requirements for this course, I have to write a detailed family autobiography. I have already begun pestering Mom and Dad for stories—so far their memories are barely holding up.

It would be a big help and extremely interesting for me if I could get stories and information from you about the family. Of course, this request is completely optional, and you can provide whatever information you want. I will, however, list some questions and topics that I will be covering in my paper/project.

- Dates of birth, marriage, separation, divorce, illness, and death
- Relationships of siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. (birth order)
- Occupations, education, religious background, ethnic heritage, etc.
- Stories you remember about your childhood; stories about your Mom and Dad: stories about your brothers and sisters: stories about my Mom or Dad as kids
- Roles in the family and how people got along: who was the "warm" one, who was the "bossy" one, who was the "black sheep", who was the "distant" one, etc. Please make up your own categories and explain. (These may have just been childhood perceptions or how you still see things.)
- Any pivotal or traumatic events which influenced the family
- Nicknames (please explain)
- Happy memories or special events that stand out
- How you think your family of origin influenced how you raised your own family
- Stories you remember about me and my family

I realize I just threw out a lot of questions—answer whatever you want, tell me something different, or feel free "to pass". I understand that some of this

information may be touchy, and you don't feel like sharing it with me. I will respect people's desire for privacy.

In addition to the paper, I will be *trying* to put together a four-generation family tree and collecting pictures. If I get enough pictures to work with I may put together a video—of sorts. Everyone is welcome to a copy if I can get it together—time will be the issue with the video. I will return anything you send that you want returned.

If talking on the phone is easier for some of you, I'd be happy to call. You could also put it on tape. I've been thinking about taking a trip out to St. Louis for awhile now, but I'm not sure that I can squeeze it in before this project is due. Hopefully, soon . . . it's been a long, long time.

Thanks, in advance, for your help. Anything you send, I will need before mid-November so that I will have enough time to put it all together.

I look forward to some juicy stories about Mom and Dad. . . .

Thanks a million!