



COUN6304 Family Systems Theory in Practice
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Division of Counseling
Fall 2023-Thursday 12:30-3:20 PM (+NOLA2U Live)
Luter Student Center 224

Jeff Nave, PhD, LPC-S, LMFT-S, NCC

Professor of Counseling, Director of Student Counseling, Director of Leeke-Magee Christian Counseling Center

Office: LMCCC 107

Phone: 504-816-8004

Email: jnave@nobts.edu

Teaching Assistant: Beth Ann Siciliano; email: bethannearley@hotmail.com

Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Mission Statement of the Counseling Program

The mission of the NOBTS Counseling Program is to provide training and supervised experience in evidence-based counseling methods to help people deal with life issues in a biblically sound way and prepare students for licensure in counseling and counseling-related professions. We seek to produce graduates who have the values, knowledge, skills, and personal disposition to promote the mental health and holistic wellness of clients across diverse populations.

Course Description

This course is designed to develop students' practical skills for application of Family Systems theory in marriage and family therapy. Students will examine theoretical foundations, research findings, basic principles, assessment techniques, and the intervention strategies of Structural, Strategic and Intergenerational Therapy models. These examinations are applied to a wide variety of problems in living and are framed within a Christian theological context.

Syllabus Distribution

This syllabus will be made available via blackboard one week prior to the first day of class. Due to regular semester updates, any version accessed prior to this date may contain inaccuracies.

Program Objectives: #2. Upon successful completion of one of the Master's Programs in Counseling, graduates should be able to synthesize theoretical and empirical knowledge in the field of counseling, #4. Upon successful completion of one of the Master's Programs in Counseling, graduates should be able to integrate historical Christian beliefs, faith, and spirituality with the best practices of mental health science, in an ethical manner.

Course Objectives

Course Objectives	Learning Experiences	Assessments
Students will articulate elements of Family Systems theory and practice consistent with Scripture and Christian theology and work toward an integrated model for helping the hurting. (2.F.2.g.)	<i>Instruction</i> Class lecture and discussion <i>Readings</i> <i>Kerr; Madanes; Minuchin; & Sherman</i>	<i>Course Assignments</i> Presentation Notebook Midterm Exam Final Exam
Students will describe the historical and theoretical foundations of Family Systems Therapies (2.F.3.a.,f.)	<i>Instruction</i> Class lecture and discussion <i>Readings</i> <i>Kerr; Madanes; Minuchin; & Sherman</i>	<i>Course Assignments</i> Notebook Midterm Exam Final Exam

Students will describe the basic principles, techniques, and applications of Structural, Strategic and Intergenerational Therapy models. (2.F.5.a-c)	<i>Instruction</i> Class lecture and discussion <i>Readings</i> Kerr; Madanes; Minuchin; & Sherman	<i>Course Assignments</i> Presentation Notebook Midterm Exam Final Exam
Students will demonstrate the perceptual, conceptual, and executive skills required to utilize these approaches in their ministries.	<i>Instruction</i> Class lecture and discussion	<i>Course Assignments</i> Role-plays Final Exam

Course Requirements/Assignments

Assignment/Requirements & Description	Percentage	Due Date
<p><i>Classroom Participation</i></p> <p>The limited class size in this course allows the use of a seminar format. This should not be confused with informal or “round table” type discussions. Students will be expected to come to class prepared to engage in informed discussion and respond to direct questions about material covered in reading assignments. Students are strongly encouraged to type organized notes of reading assignments for use in class. These notes are a graded part of the content of the Structural/Strategic Therapies notebook.</p>	15%	
<p><i>Presentation of Structural, Strategic or Intergenerational Resources</i></p> <p>Each student will be required to locate and duplicate a journal article that addresses some application of Structural/Strategic therapy. These articles will be presented at the beginning of class on Tuesdays. The presentation is to last around 10 minutes and should reflect critical thought about the content of the article. Students will turn in a copy of the presented article to the instructor on the day of their presentation.</p>	10%	Sign up for date
<p><i>Participation in Role-Plays (including submission of vignettes)</i></p> <p><u>Participation in Role-Plays</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups assigned to perform as client families during role-plays will be expected to meet briefly before class to assign roles, establish a family plot, and practice interactional styles. Details of role-play assignments are not to be discussed outside the family group. Therapists will be expected to apply theory and techniques presented or discussed in class prior to their participation in the role of therapist. <p><u>Role-play vignettes</u></p> <p>This assignment will involve development of family scenarios that will be utilized for role-plays later in the term. Students will be required to prepare 2 vignettes. Each should include two to four family members, a presenting concern, and brief intake information (demographics, previous psych hx). In addition, an outline of</p>	20%	Vignettes due at second class meeting

family alliances should be included for the purpose of planning the role-play (this information will not be shared with the “therapist” at role-play.) The more detail, the better. Vignettes should be one page, typed and 2 copies should be turned in.		
Structural/Strategic Therapies Notebook Each student is to compile and organize a notebook from reading notes, handouts, role-play observations, etc. This notebook should be organized as a practical resource for you in your counseling ministry. Suggested Sections for your notebook are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Notes from Reading Assignments • Outline of Typical Structural, Strategic and Intergenerational Therapy Protocol • Diagnosis Worksheets • Copy of resource presented in class • Resource Bibliography (APA Bibliographic entry for all resources presented in class) • Role-play Vignettes • Treatment Outlines for vignettes 	20%	12/7
Mid-Term Examination	15%	10/12
Final Examination	20%	See Catalog

Textbooks

Required Textbooks

Kerr, Michael. (2003). *One Family's Story: A Primer on Bowen Theory*. Bowen Center for the Study of the Family. 978-0965854023

Madanes, C. (2000). *Behind the One-Way Mirror: Advances in the Practice of Strategic Therapy, reprint ed.*. Wipf & Stock. 978-1579104429

Minuchin, S., Reiter, M. & Borda, C. (2013). *The Craft of Family Therapy: Challenging Certainties*. Routledge. 978-0415708128

Richardson, Ronald W. (2011). *Family Ties That Bind: A Self-help Guide to Change Through Family of Origin Therapy, 4th ed.*. Self-Counsel Press. 978-1770400863

Sherman, R. & Fredman, N. (2015). *Handbook of structured techniques in marriage and family therapy, reprint ed.* New York: Brunner/Mazel. 978-0876304242

Additional Assigned Readings

Selected readings of the works of Salvador Minuchin, Jay Haley and other authors will be assigned.

Course Teaching Methodology

The course will involve the following methods of in-class instruction: class discussion, lecture, discussion groups, roleplays, and videos. Additionally, this course will involve the following outside-of-class instruction: reading assignments, writing assignments, therapy research, and group work.

Technical Resources and Competencies

Students in the NOBTS Counseling Program are expected to have access to a home computer or laptop, Internet access, and basic Microsoft Office software (Word, PowerPoint, and Excel). Desktop computers are available for use by students in the Information Technology Center (ITC), 2nd floor, Hardin Student Center, New Orleans Campus. The online version of Microsoft Office is [available free](#) to enrolled NOBTS students through the seminary ITC. In addition, students should develop competencies in the following areas. These competencies are based on the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Technical Competencies.

1. Be able to use productivity software to develop group presentations, letters, and reports.
2. Be able to use such audiovisual equipment as video recorders, audio recorders, projection equipment, video conferencing equipment, and playback units.
3. Be able to use email.
4. Be able to help clients search for various types of counseling-related information via the internet, including information about careers, employment opportunities, educational & training opportunities, financial assistance/scholarships, treatment procedures, and social and personal information.
5. Be able to subscribe, participate in, and sign off counseling related listservs.
6. Be able to access and use counseling related CD-ROM and online databases.
7. Be knowledgeable of the legal and ethical codes which relate to counseling services via the Internet.
8. Be knowledgeable of the strengths and weaknesses of counseling services provided via the Internet.
9. Be able to use the Internet for finding and using continuing education opportunities in counseling.
10. Be able to evaluate the quality of Internet information.

These competencies meet or exceed the recommendations of both the American Counseling Association and the Council of Standards in Human Services Education.

Evaluation of Grade

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

Classroom Participation	15%
Presentation of Structural, Strategic or Intergenerational Resources	10%
Participation in Role-Plays (including submission of vignettes)	20%
Structural/Strategic Therapies Notebook:	20%
Mid-Term Examination:	15%
Final Examination:	20%
Total	100%

Grading Scale:

The following grading scale is used at NOBTS:

A: 93-100 B: 85-92 C: 77-84 D: 70-76 F: below 70

Course Policies, Academic Conduct, and Professional Conduct

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend and participate in the class sessions. Any student missing more than nine hours may receive an automatic grade of "F" for the course. Three tardies will count as one absence.

If you are taking this course as a NOLA2U Live student, please note the following attendance policies:

1. The course on the New Orleans campus will be connected synchronously via Web conferencing with Internet students. These courses will require weekly attendance at the stated class meeting times.
2. Students are only allowed to miss the amount of class time specified in the NOBTS attendance policy as stated in this syllabus.
3. Technical issues will not be considered a valid reason for missing a class session.

Academic Honesty Policy

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

Academic Policies

Academic policies relate to absences, grading scale, final examination schedules, and other topics can be found in the current online catalog: [New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

Classroom Parameters

Please arrive on time.

Turn off cell phones. Utilize laptops and other technology for class purposes only.

Respect the professor and other members of the class.

Maintain confidentiality when someone shares personal information.

Participate in class and group discussions.

Classroom Participation/Active Dialogue

Student participation is expected. Class interaction is an important and valuable aspect of the learning environment where we can experience the truth of the Great Commandment by truly knowing one another.

Disabilities and Accommodations

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary does not discriminate against applicants/ students on the basis of personal disabilities. The Seminary, in voluntary compliance with the American Disabilities Act, will provide reasonable institutional accommodations, modifications, and adjustments to enable and empower students with disabilities to participate in Seminary programs and activities to the fullest extent possible. However, NOBTS cannot support accommodations that place undue hardship on the Seminary or its resources or which alter the essential requirements of curriculum and academic progress. While the seminary does not provide direct assistance to students in the form of equipment or personnel, accommodations may be made by individual professors at their discretion. These accommodations usually take the form of early access to lecture materials in electronic format and additional time to complete tests and assignments. The most efficient way to pursue such accommodations is to provide the Director of Testing and Counseling (Dr. Jeff Nave, jnave@nobts.edu, 504-282-4455 ext. 8004) with documentation of the condition for which you seek accommodation, an explanation of helpful accommodations received in the past, and a description of the specific accommodations you desire. The Director of Testing and Counseling will document your request and communicate on your behalf with the professors who teach the course(s) for which you are registered. The seminary reserves the right to consider each request for "special" accommodations on a case by case basis pursuant to the criteria enumerated above.

Diversity

The Counseling Program at NOBTS affirms the Christian doctrinal position that God created man in His own image, and that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love. We believe the counseling profession affords our students and graduates the opportunity to be "salt and light" (Matthew 5:13-16) whatever their places of service, and that a robust appreciation for and sensitivity to human diversity is key to that end. Further, a learning environment diverse in its people, curricula, scholarship, research, and creative activities expands opportunities for intellectual inquiry and engagement, helps students develop critical thinking skills, and prepares students for social and civic responsibilities. Students and faculty benefit from diversity. The quality of learning, research, scholarship, and creative activities are enhanced by a climate of inclusion, understanding, and appreciation of the full range of human experience. We are committed to nurturing and training a diverse student body in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation of differences. As a result, the counseling program is committed to diversity and equal opportunity and recognizes that it must represent the diversity inherent in American society, reflected in our local community, and aligned with the core values of the NOBTS community.

Emergencies

In cases of emergency, such as hurricanes, disease outbreaks, or other disasters, go to the seminary website (www.nobts.edu) for information. The seminary administration will post information, such as the nature of the emergency, instructions for response, and evacuation and return dates. Please check Blackboard for information specific to this course. Because Blackboard is available, the course will continue even if the main campus is closed. Please consider registering for the seminary's priority text messaging service through [SelfServe](#). This service is used only in emergencies, and will allow the seminary to deliver urgent information to you as needed.

Extra Credit

No extra credit is available in this course.

Netiquette

Netiquette refers to appropriate online behavior in Blackboard or other online discussions. Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on Discussion Boards or whenever interaction occurs through web, digital, or other electronic medium. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times in the online environment.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Policy for Graduating Seniors

Graduating seniors are responsible for alerting the professor of your intention to graduate. All of your assignments must be completed by noon (12:00 PM) on the Wednesday prior to commencement exercises.

Professor's Policy on Late Assignments

All work is due by 11:59 PM (Central Time Zone) on the due date listed in the syllabus. For this policy, "days" are calendar days from 12:00 AM to 11:59 PM. Work turned in one to seven days late will receive a 10% deduction; work turned in eight to fourteen days late will receive a 20% deduction; work will not be accepted after 14 days. No coursework will be accepted after the last final exam day of the semester as listed in the graduate catalog. In cases of extreme extenuating circumstances, students may appeal to the counseling department faculty for an exception to this policy by completing a form available from the Counseling Division Administrative Assistant.

Professional Conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the appropriate codes of ethics for their particular programs. Any behavior deemed unethical will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

Professor's Availability and Assignment Feedback

The student may contact the professor at any time using the email address provided in the course syllabus. The professor will make every effort to return answers to emailed questions within a 24-hour period of time. Assignments requiring grading will be returned to the student within a reasonable period of time. Student feedback on graded assignments will be provided through the grading rubric located in the student's Blackboard Grade Book. The student will find comments in the grading rubric, as well as on graded paper assignments. The student may also email the course grader with questions regarding grading.

Reading Assignments

Students are responsible for completing all reading assignments.

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu or My.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. Canvas@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Canvas Learning Management System (Faculty/Students/Staff) Canvas.NOBTS.edu.
3. Bluejeanshelpdesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Bluejeans & NOBTS Bluejeans classrooms (On and Off-Campus)
4. TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS On-Campus Phone system.
5. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests in the Flex classrooms and for general technical questions/support requests. If you are not sure who to contact, use this email address!

6. [504.816.8180](tel:504.816.8180) - Call for any technical questions/support requests. (Currently available Mon-Thurs 7:00am-9:00pm & Fri 7:00-7:00pm Central Time)
7. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Writing Center

NOBTS has adopted a Quality Enhancement Plan to improve English writing at the graduate level. As part of this effort, NOBTS has established a writing center located in the Hardin Student Center (290B). Visit the official [NOBTS Writing Center](#) online help site for writing academic papers and essays. You will discover writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help you become a better writer. Go here for Turabian and APA style helps and guidelines. You will also find language fonts for Greek and Hebrew. More information about how to set up an appointment for writing assistance is available on the writing center page.

Writing Style

All papers in counseling courses are to be written in American Psychological Association (APA) style. Please see the latest edition of the [Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association](#).

Student Services

This is a partial list of NOBTS student services available to all students, no matter your delivery system or location. If you have questions or do not see what you need here, please refer to www.nobts.edu/student-services, email us at studentservices@nobts.edu, or call the Dean of Students office at 800-662-8701, ext. 3283. We are glad to assist you!

Need	Email	Phone	Web Page
Advising – Graduate Program	studentservices@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x3312	www.nobts.edu/registrar/default.html#advising
Advising – Undergraduate Program	lcadminasst@nobts.edu	504.816.8590	www.nobts.edu/LeavellCollege
Church Minister Relations (for ministry jobs)	cmr@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x3291	www.nobts.edu/CMR
Financial Aid	financialaid@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x3348	www.nobts.edu/financialaid
PREP (help to avoid student debt)	Prepassistant1@nobts.edu	504.816.8091	www.nobts.edu/prep
Gatekeeper NOBTS news	pr@nobts.edu	504.816.8003	nobtsgatekeeper.wordpress.com
Information Technology Center	itcsupport@nobts.edu	504.816.8180	selfserve.nobts.edu
Help with Blackboard	blackboardhelpdesk@nobts.edu	504.816.8180	nobts.blackboard.com
Library	library@nobts.edu	504.816.8018	www.nobts.edu/Library
Online library resources	library@nobts.edu	504.816.8018	http://www.nobts.edu/research-links/default.html
Writing and Turabian style help	library@nobts.edu	504.816.8018	http://www.nobts.edu/writing/default.html
Guest Housing (Providence Guest House)	ph@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x4455	www.provhouse.com
Student Counseling	lmccc@nobts.edu	504.816.8004	www.nobts.edu/student-services/counseling-services.html
Women's Programs	womensacademic@nobts.edu	504.282.4455 x3334	www.nobts.edu/women

For additional library resources in your state, check <http://www.nobts.edu/library/interlibrary-loan.html>

- \$ GALILEO for Georgia students
- \$ LALINC for Louisiana students
- \$ Florida Virtual Library (<http://www.flvlib.org/>) for Florida students
- \$ Interact with us online at –

Course Schedule

WEEK	Topic	Reading Assignment
1	Introduction-Systems Principles	
2	History of the Structural Approach Structural Theory	Minuchin 1& 2 Handbook 1
3	Normal Family Development Structural View of Pathology	Minuchin 3 & 4 Handbook 4
4	Pattern for Structural Change Joining and Assessment	Minuchin 5 & 6 Handbook 5
5	AACC World Conference Sept. 13-15 Alternative Classroom Assignment	
6	Structural Interventions Structural Role-Plays	Article: The Viability of Structural Family Therapy in the Twenty-first Century...
7	Strategic Family Therapy	As assigned
8 October 2-6	Fall Break No Class	
9	Mid-Term Thursday, October 14	
10	Intergenerational Introduction and Concepts	
11	Family Ties That Bind Workbook Due-Presentation	
12	Role-Plays	
13	Role-Plays	
14	Role-Plays	
15 Nov. 20-24	Thanksgiving Break No Classes	
16	Final Exam	

Selected Bibliography

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- Hunt, Morton. *The Story of Psychology*. Rev. ed. N.Y.:Anchor, 2007.
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- Jung, Carl G. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1965.
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- Millon, Theodore. *Toward a New Personology*. N.Y.: Wiley & Sons, 1990.
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- Sullivan, Harry Stack. *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry*. N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 1953.