I. Course Description
This course is designed to familiarize students with intimate relationships, marriage, and the assessment and treatment of the couple relationship. Topics include, but are not limited to, sexuality, societal trends, roles, gender, diversity, premarital counseling and preventive approaches.

II. Rationale
This course is a core course for marriage and family track students. Community and school track students, as well as graduate students from similar professional areas, may take this course as an elective.

III. State Adopted Proficiencies for Teachers and/or Administrators/Counselors (N/A)

IV. TExES Competencies (N/A)

V. Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes (Standards in bold indicate outcomes which are primarily met and measured in this class)
This course is designed to enable students to demonstrate understanding of the following CACREP marriage, couple, and family counseling standards:

A. CACREP Standard B-1: Demonstrates the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards in marriage, couple, and family counseling.

B. CACREP Standard C-3: Understands human sexuality (e.g., gender, sexual functioning, sexual orientation) and its impact on family and couple functioning.

C. CACREP Standard E-2: Recognizes societal trends and treatment issues related to working with multicultural and diverse family systems (e.g., families in transition, dual-career couples, blended families, same-sex couples).

D. CACREP Standard E-5: Understands the effect of local, state, and national policies, programs, and services on diverse family systems.

E. CACREP Standard I-1: Understands how to critically evaluate research relevant to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling.

F. CACREP Standard I-3: Knows evidence-based treatments and basic strategies for evaluating counseling outcomes in marriage, couple, and family counseling.
G. CACREP Standard J-1: Applies relevant research findings to inform the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling.

H. CACREP Standard J-2: Develops measurable outcomes for marriage, couple, and family counseling programs, interventions, and treatments. See I.

I. CACREP Standard A-6: Understands family development and the life cycle, sociology of the family, family phenomenology, contemporary families, family wellness, families and culture, aging and family issues, family violence, and related family concerns.

J. CACREP Standard C-1: Understands issues of marriage, couple, and family life-cycle dynamics; healthy family functioning; family structures; and family of origin and intergenerational influences in a multicultural society.

K. CACREP Standard C-2: Recognizes specific problems (e.g., addictive behaviors, domestic violence, suicide risk, immigration) and interventions that can enhance family functioning.

L. CACREP Standard D-1: Uses preventive, developmental, and wellness approaches in working with individuals, couples, families, and other systems such as premarital counseling, parenting skills training, and relationship enhancement.

M. CACREP Standard D-2: Uses systems theory to conceptualize issues in marriage, couple, and family counseling.

N. CACREP Standard E-1: Understands how living in a multicultural society affects couples and families.

O. CACREP Standard E-4: Understands the effects of racism, discrimination, sexism, power, privilege, and oppression on one’s own life and that of the client(s).

P. CACREP Standard G-2: Understands marriage, couple, and family assessment tools and techniques appropriate to clients’ needs in a multicultural society.

Q. CACREP Standard G-3: Understands the impact of addiction, trauma, psychopharmacology, physical and mental health, wellness, and illness on marriage, couple, and family functioning.

R. CACREP Standard H-2: Uses systems assessment models and procedures to evaluate family functioning.

S. CACREP Standard H-3: Determines which members of a family system should be involved in treatment.

T. CACREP Standard J-3: Analyzes and uses data to increase the effectiveness of marriage, couple, and family counseling interventions and programs.

**Learning Outcomes**

*Upon completion of the course students will:*

1. Demonstrate the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards in marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP Standard B-1).

   Achievement is evidenced by 95% of students earning a B or above by resolving an ethical dilemma using AAMFT Code of Ethics. (Case Study)

2. Understand human sexuality (e.g., gender, sexual functioning, sexual orientation) and its impact on family and couple functioning (CACREP Standard C-3). Achievement is evidenced by 95% of students earning a B or above on examination over Chapter 9 of textbook.
3. Recognize societal trends and treatment issues related to working with multicultural and diverse family systems (e.g., families in transition, dual-career couples, blended families, same-sex couples) CACREP Standard E-2. Achievement is evidenced by 95% of students earning a B or Above on development of *case conceptualization and treatment plan* on script/role-play.

4. Understand the effect of local, state, and national policies, programs, and services on diverse family systems (CACREP Standard E-5). Achievement is evidenced by 95% of students earning a B or Above on *special topic research assignment*.

5. Understand how to critically evaluate research relevant to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP Standard I-1). Achievement is evidenced by 95% of students earning a B or Above on analysis of *psychometric properties* of an assessment tool used with couples.

6. Acquire knowledge of evidence-based treatments and basic strategies for evaluating counseling outcomes in marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP Standard I-3). Achievement is evidenced by 95% of students earning a B or Above on *development of case conceptualization and treatment plan on script/role-play*.

7. Apply relevant research findings to inform the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP Standard J-1). Achievement is evidenced by 95% of students earning a B or Above on *assessment of interventions*.

8. Develops measurable outcomes for marriage, couple, and family counseling programs, interventions, and treatments (CACREP Standard J-2) Achievement is evidenced by 95% of students earning a B or Above on *case conceptualization and treatment plan* on *Poster presentation*.

VI. Course Topics
The major topics to be covered are: legal and ethical standards, human sexuality and the couple relationship, societal trends, multicultural and diverse family systems, research relevant to couple and family counseling, evidence based practice strategies, and developing measurable outcomes.

VII. Instructional Methods and Activities
This course combines lecture, discussion, demonstration, and experiential activities including role plays to facilitate student learning. Each student is expected to contribute to course learning by actively listening and participating in lectures, class discussions, and activities.

VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment
A. *Methods of evaluation and criteria for grade assignments are as follows:*
1. Examinations: There are two objective examinations covering assigned readings and lectures. 50 points each. (100 points)

2. Each student will take and self-score assessments and write about his/her personal experience. Students will develop intervention strategies to use in couple's counseling to assess couple's relationship and evaluate couple's counseling outcomes. Assessments will be included in the electronic portfolio. (20 points)

3. Students will work in small groups to develop a case study on a specific relationship problem or special population (e.g. aging/retirement, bicultural couples, domestic violence, infertility problems, multi problem couple, couple impacted by economic conditions, unemployment, pre-marital counseling, remarriage issues, same sex couples, dual career couples, medical and psychiatric issues, couples and chronic or terminal illness of a child etc.). Write a script for a couple's counseling session including in the role-play treatment plans with measurable outcomes and evidence based treatment strategies, present in class, and add material to electronic portfolio. (50 points)

4. Each group will present case study through a poster session. Poster must include research supported intervention strategies plus handouts posted on Blackboard with references. Brochures and community resource list will enhance class learning experience. Obtain professor approval of topic to avoid duplication. (50 points)

5. Students will work-through an ethical dilemma in a case study using the AAMFT Code of Ethics and role-play couple's issues in class. (20 points)

6. Students will submit an electronic portfolio with assessments, case study, a script/role-play, and poster. (20 points)

6. Students will document evidence-based research to support special topic assignment. (30 points)

B. Methods of Evaluation and Final Course Grade

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<thead>
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<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Two Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interventions</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Cases/Role-Plays</td>
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<td>Special Topic Case/Research</td>
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<td>Electronic Portfolio</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Grading Scale**
A = 270-300; B = 269-240; C = 239-210;
D = 209–180; F = 179 and below
### Course Schedule and Policies

#### A. Tentative Course Schedule and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Reading/Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/07</td>
<td>Myths and Mistakes of Marital Therapy</td>
<td>Chapter 1 Assessment/Reflection Intervention</td>
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<td>7/08</td>
<td>Repair and the Core Triad of Balance</td>
<td>Chapter 2 Assessment/Reflection Role Play</td>
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<td>The Sound Marital House: A Theory of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapter 3 Assessment/Reflection Intervention</td>
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<td>Assessment of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapter 4 Assessment/Reflection Role-Play</td>
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<td>The Disasters and Masters of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapters 5 Research/Exam I</td>
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<td>Assumptions and Intervention Overview</td>
<td>Chapters 6 Intervention</td>
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<td>Enhancing the Marital Friendship</td>
<td>Chapter 7 Case</td>
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<td>Solving What Is Solvable</td>
<td>Chapters 8 Intervention</td>
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<td>Living with the Inevitable</td>
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<td>Life Dreams and Shared Meanings</td>
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<td>Resistance to Change</td>
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<td>Avoiding Relapse</td>
<td>Chapter 12 Intervention</td>
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<td>7/28</td>
<td>Putting It All Together: Working as a Team and Terminating Therapy</td>
<td>Chapter 13 Special Topic Assignment</td>
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<td>Emotion and Meta-emotion</td>
<td>Chapter 14 Case</td>
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<td>Buffering Children from Marital Conflict</td>
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<td>8/06</td>
<td>Poster presentations</td>
<td>Poster Presentations</td>
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B. Class policies
Reading assignments are to be completed prior to class, and students are expected to be prepared to participate in small group/class discussion of material and other class activities. Learning objectives must be met in order to pass the course. Attendance is required. Please notify instructor and group members if you must be absent due to illness or unavoidable absence. Late work will be penalized 10 points, and no work will be accepted. Out of class work will use APA (6th ed.) format (12 pt. font, double spaced, 5-space indentations for paragraphs, 1-inch margins, title page, etc.). Electronic devices may not be used in class unless express permission is obtained from the instructor. Students who must have cell phones on are required to set them to silent/vibrate, and shall not accept calls or respond to texts unless there is an emergency. Academic honesty must be observed, and plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a 0 for that work, filing of academic dishonesty paperwork with the appropriate university office, and perhaps a failing grade in the course. Incomplete grade requests, in accordance with College of Education policy, are granted only in extraordinary circumstances and must be requested in advance by the student.

IX. Required textbook

X. Supplemental reading and references


Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a grade of 0 on the particular assignment and a grade of Non-Credit in the course. In addition, a record of the academic misconduct will be filed with the Dean. Students have the right to appeal the judgment or penalty. In addition, academic misconduct will be referred to the CNEP department for consideration.

XIII. Dropping a class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation will not automatically result in your being dropped from the course. Be sure to check the University’s academic calendar to verify the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

XIV. Grade Appeals

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

XV. Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical
access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

XVI. Rubrics
A. Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale: Guidelines for Analysis

CNEP 5324 Measurement of CACREP Standard J-2: Develops measurable outcomes for marriage, couple, and family counseling programs, interventions, and treatments.

ASSIGNMENT: The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (R-DAS) is a self report measure of relationship adjustment. Requiring only 5-10 minutes to administer to couples or individuals, the instrument assists in determining the degree of relationship satisfaction couples are experiencing. Subscales of the R-DAS include Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Cohesion, and Affectional Expression. Take and self score the R-DAS according to the instructions and plot your raw scores on the R-DAS profile. Write about your experience taking the assessment and explain how you might use it along with a clinical interview and/or other assessments to help couples examine their relationships. Discuss how responses to individual items could serve as a basis for discussion. Are there contraindications for using the R-DAS? Reflect on usefulness of the R-DAS with diverse couples. Any words or ideas not your own should be quoted. It is plagiarism to copy directly from any source without using quotation marks and citing the source.

GRADING RUBRIC: Your paper will be graded according to these guidelines:

1. **Content (50%)**
   A. Does paper have a central idea that can be expressed in 1 or 2 simple sentences?
   B. Does paper have adequate summary and discussion using assignment guidelines?
   C. Does paper contain thoughts and ideas based on your test results?
   D. Does paper address several perspectives?
   E. Does paper describe how could the DAS could be useful in formulating a treatment plan, selecting interventions and treatments, and measuring outcomes for couples counseling?

   **Examples of Points deducted for issues with content (50 points)**
   - No central idea -15
   - Focus on the test rather than application possibilities in counseling couples -15
   - No description of how DAS could be useful in formulating a treatment plan, selecting interventions and treatments, and measuring outcomes for couples counseling? -15
   - Lack of perspective or connection to how assessment can be used in counseling couples -5

2. **Organization (20%)**
   A. Does paper have introduction that gives the reader a sense of the paper’s focus?
   B. Is there a conclusion that summarizes the paper or offers some final perspective on the topic?
   C. Is the paper ordered in a way that is logical, clear, and easy to follow?
   D. Does each paragraph have a central idea?
   E. Does the paper flow, with clear and logical transitions between paragraphs?
   F. Are personal views clearly defined and is information from the DAS well integrated into the flow of the paper?
Points deducted for issues with organization (20 points)
Intro poorly constructed -3
Thesis statement missing -3
No logical flow -3
No main theme per paragraph -3
Transitions missing or clumsy -3
Information from DAS vague or undefined -2
Conclusion poor -3

3. Grammar and style (20%)
A. Are there grammatical or spelling problems?
B. Is the writing style clear?
C. Is word choice simple and straightforward?
D. Are sentences cohesive?

Examples of Points deducted for Grammar and Style (20 points)
Certain grammar errors are inexcusable at this level. Among them are errors in
subject/verb agreement, misuse or absence of apostrophes, verb tense shifts, misplaced or
dangling modifiers, and incomplete sentences. Papers containing more than ten
grammatical errors will be returned to be revised and resubmitted with the best possible
grade for revision being 80%.
Each mistake -1, up to 10
Unclear writing style -5
Simple word choices and repetition -5

4. Required formatting as specified by APA 6th edition (10%)
One useful source for APA 6th edition style is
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1/.
A. Typed double-spaced in a word document
B. 1 inch margins on all sides
C. 12 point font
D. Times New Roman or similar standard type
E. Running head on title page
F. Page header at the top of pages
G. Title page (1 page) includes Title of Your Paper; Your name; Texas A&M
   University-Corpus Christi; CNEP 5324 and date
H. Body of paper (1-2 pages)

Points deducted for formatting (10 points)
Page length not met -5
Margins and/or font size and type incorrect -3
Missing Heading Information -2

B. Style Guide and Grading Rubric for Research Article for Case Study Development

CNEP 5324 Measurement of
- CACREP Standard I-1: Understands how to critically evaluate research relevant to
  the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling.
• CACREP Standard I-3: Knows evidence-based treatments and basic strategies for evaluating counseling outcomes in marriage, couple, and family counseling.
• CACREP Standard J-1: Applies relevant research findings to inform the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling.
• CACREP Standard B-1: Demonstrates the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards in marriage, couple, and family counseling.

Assignment: Read and critically evaluate Gottman's outcome effectiveness research relevant to the special population you are basing the case study for counseling couples.

I. Check the following:
   A. Does the summary of the article include the following?
      1. identified problem
      2. purpose of the study
      3. very brief synopsis of the literature review
      4. explanation of the basic research design
      5. description of the sample
      6. inclusion of diversity and multiculturalism issues
      7. explanation of how data was analyzed
      8. results of study and how findings support the hypothesis and purpose
      9. how results inform the practice of counseling
         a. how study is important or not important to counseling practice?
         b. how results of study can be used in a practical way by counselors to evaluate counseling outcomes?
         c. Does this study contribute to evidenced based practice research? If so, how?
      10. your perspective
          a. What information was not included that you would want to know?
          b. What is one idea that impressed you?
          c. What is your overall assessment of this research article?

Directions: Conceptualize assigned case scenario using what you learned from readings and class activities. Develop treatment plan based on the Integrative model presented in text in addition to guidelines provided below. Describe how you could facilitate the couple through all five stages of the model.

Case discussion of couple should include:

1. Relevant societal trends and treatment issues
2. Relevant multicultural and diversity concerns
3. Possible effect of local, state, and national policies, programs, & services

Guidelines for discussing each stage of the integrative model:
Stage 1: Student will demonstrate an understanding of the individual viewpoints of each partner. Student will then discuss how interventions that can assist couples in reaching an interactive definition of the problem.

Stage 2: Student will discuss how the problem can be externalized. Students will discuss how they can collaboratively develop one behavioral, one cognitive, and one affective goal with the couple.

Stage 3: Students will develop at least one intervention per goal in order to facilitate shifts in behavior, emotion, and cognition. Student will identify strengths of both partners and indicate how they can instill or encourage hope. Interventions will be should be assessed for congruence with goal. Outcome effectiveness research needs to be cited to justify the selection of at least one intervention.

Stage 4: Student will identify potential roadblocks and describe how the counselor can prepare couples to deal with future obstacles and stay committed to change and growth.

Stage 5: Students will discuss how couple and counselor will know when counseling goals have been reached, how to decrease anxiety about termination, and identify how couple could celebrate their success.

Rubric and Guidelines for Case Conceptualization and Treatment plan

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<th>70 – 79%</th>
<th>80 – 89%</th>
<th>90 – 100%</th>
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<td>Poor case conceptualization that does not closely follow above guidelines; discussion inaccurate or poorly grounded in course materials; poor writing with too many errors or mistakes; poorly constructed sentences and paragraphs.</td>
<td>Conceptualization of case only vaguely referencing guidelines above; some comments inaccurate or not grounded in course materials; mistakes or errors in writing or writing poorly edited; awkward construction of some sentences or paragraphs.</td>
<td>Thoughtful conceptualization of case referring to most of the details in guidelines above; most comments accurate and grounded in course material; some errors or mistakes in writing; some ideas may not be well developed; a few sentences and paragraphs.</td>
<td>Thoughtful and detailed conceptualization of case referring to all guidelines above; all comments accurate and grounded in course materials; only minimal errors in writing; ideas developed using well constructed sentences and flowing paragraphs.</td>
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</table>
Gottman's Sound Relationship House Theory (2013, 1.1.1.):

1. Affective couple therapy-focus on emotion, on the emotions the couple brings into session, on dysfunctional negative interaction patterns (escalation or emotional disengagement), and on replacing the Four Horsemen with their antidotes in order to make conflict discussions more functional, constructive and regulated. It includes emotional repair, building safety, trust, bonding, love, intimacy, friendship, and positive effect.

2. Behavioral couple therapy-focus on changing interaction patterns.

3. Existentially-based couple therapy-focus on gridlock conflict (Dreams within conflict) and building the shared meaning system.

4. Cognitive couple therapy-focus on how couples think about their relationship, and how they feel about feelings (meta-emotion philosophy).

5. Narrative couple therapy-focus on the stories the partners tell themselves about their history, their purposes and their struggles.

6. Systemic couple therapy-based upon the sequential, time-series, and mathematical modeling of actual interaction patterns that describe the relationship as a system.

7. Psychodynamic couple therapy-based on specific aspects of analysis of the role the primary family and other salient past relationships play in the relationship here and now, especially in our analysis of the anatomy of a conflict.

Outcome and Effectiveness Research Articles for Couples Counseling


Atkins, D. C., Dimidjian, S., Bedics, J. D., & Christensen, A. (2009). Couple discord and depression in couples during couple therapy and in depressed individuals during


violence within intact couple relationships: Outcomes of multi-couple versus individual couple therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 30*(3), 305-318.


C. Special Topics Poster Presentation
CNEP 5324 Measurement of

- CACREP Standard E-2: Recognizes societal trends and treatment issues related to working with multicultural and diverse family systems (e.g., families in transition, dual-career couples, blended families, same-sex couples).

Name of Student(s): __________________________________________________________
Poster Topic: ________________________________________________________________


_____1. Organization of poster including neat appearance.

_____2. Information appropriately focused on the couple relationship

_____3. Comprehensive coverage of selected problem/population

_____4. Inclusion of appropriate counseling strategies for selected problem/population

_____5. Addressed issues related to multicultural and diverse family systems

_____6. Usefulness of information for counselors working with couples

_____7. Ability to dialogue with peers and answer questions about problem/population

_____8. Relevance of references and other resources

_____9. Quality of Handout

_____10. Evidence of research (in library and or community) necessary to present accurate and helpful information

Additional comments:

Rubric and Guidelines for Case Conceptualization and Treatment plan

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