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

II. Rationale
This course is a core course for marriage and family track students. Community and school 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, and 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.

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 students resolving an ethical dilemma using AAMFT Code of Ethic in a 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 students participating and responding to a discussion question posted on the discussion board addressing
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 students conceptualizing a case and treatment plan and participating in triadic role-plays in class.

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 85% of students earning a B or above on a 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 85% of students earning a B or above on analysis of assessments used with couple in case study.

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 100% of the students developing a case with a treatment plan and participating in triadic role-in class.

7. Apply relevant research findings to inform the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP Standard J-1). Achievement is evidenced by 85% of students earning a B or above by completing an electronic portfolio of assessments and interventions.

8. Develops measurable outcomes for marriage, couple, and family counseling programs, interventions, and treatments (CACREP Standard J-2) Achievement is evidenced by 85% of students earning a B or above on development of a case using Gottman’s approach to assessing couple relationship.

VI. Course Topics
The major topics to be covered are: myths and mistakes of marital therapy, marriage assessment, enhancing marital friendship, resistance to change, life dreams, avoiding relapse, legal and ethical standards, societal trends, multicultural and diverse family systems, research relevant to couple counseling, evidence based practice strategies, and developing measurable outcomes.

VII. Instructional Methods and Activities
This course combines face-to-face and online teaching, 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 class and online discussions, presentations, role-plays, and other activities as assigned.

VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment

A Methods of evaluation and criteria for grade assignments are as follows:

1. Final Examination: Objective format covering assigned readings.  
   *(50 points)*

2. Quizzes (10): Objective format covering assigned chapters.  
   *(100 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). 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.  
   *(30 points)*

4. Each group will develop a conference presentation a special topic. Presentation 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.  
   *(40 points)*

5. Students will work-through an ethical dilemma in a case study using the AAMFT Code of Ethics and address and respond to four other questions posted on Blackboard in addition to providing peer feedback.  
   *(50 points)*

6. Each student will take and self-score assessments and write about his/her personal experience or the experiences of an identified couple to complete this assignment. Students will develop intervention strategies to use in couple's counseling to assess couple's relationship and evaluate couple's counseling outcomes. Students will apply *Gottman’s 17-Area Scale*. Assessments and report will be included in the electronic portfolio.  
   *(30 points)*

B. Methods of Evaluation and Final Course Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes (10)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Assignments</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cases/Role-Plays/Participation</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Topic/Research</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electronic Portfolio</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
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</table>

**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>M 7/06</td>
<td>Myths and Mistakes of Marital Therapy</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Assessment/Reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 7/07</td>
<td>Repair and the Core Triad of Balance</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Four Horsemen</td>
<td>Assessment/Reflection</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Defensiveness and Contempt</td>
<td>Intervention/Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 7/08</td>
<td>The Sound Marital House: A Theory of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapter 3/Quizzes 1 and 2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Assessment/Reflection</td>
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<td>Intervention</td>
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<td>Online</td>
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<td>TR 7/09</td>
<td>Assessment of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
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<td>Assessment/Reflection</td>
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<td>Intervention/Role-Play</td>
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<td>M 7/13</td>
<td>The Disasters and Masters of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapters 5/Quizzes 3, 4, 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Online)</td>
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<td>T 7/14</td>
<td>Assumptions and Intervention Overview</td>
<td>Chapters 6/Quiz 6</td>
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<td>Intervention/Video</td>
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<td>W 7/15</td>
<td>Enhancing the Marital Friendship</td>
<td>Chapter 7/Quizzes 7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Online)</td>
<td>Case</td>
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<td>TR 7/16</td>
<td>Solving What Is Solvable</td>
<td>Chapters 8</td>
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<td>Intervention/Role-Play</td>
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<td>M 7/20</td>
<td>Living with the Inevitable</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
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<td>(Online)</td>
<td>Quizzes 8, 9</td>
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<td>T 7/21</td>
<td>Life Dreams and Shared Meanings</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<td>Quiz 10</td>
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<td>Intervention/Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 7/22</td>
<td>Resistance to Change</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Online)</td>
<td>Quiz 11</td>
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<td>Case</td>
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<td>TR 7/23</td>
<td>Avoiding Relapse</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Intervention/Role-Play</td>
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<td>M 7/27</td>
<td>Putting It All Together: Working as a Team and Terminating Therapy</td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Online)</td>
<td>Quizzes 12, 13</td>
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<td>T 7/28</td>
<td>Emotion and Meta-emotion</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intervention/Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 7/29</td>
<td>Buffering Children from Marital Conflict</td>
<td>Chapter 15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Online)</td>
<td>Quizzes 14, 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>TR 7/30</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>Special Topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>M 8/03</td>
<td>Assessment Using <em>Gottman’s 17-Area Scale</em></td>
<td>Electronic Portfolio</td>
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<td>Outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 8/04</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>Special Topics</td>
</tr>
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<td>W 8/05</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>(Online)</td>
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</table>
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. Out of class work will use APA (6th ed.) format (12 pt. font, double spaced, 5-space indentions 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


XI. 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. See http://tinyurl.com/m8jj523

XII. 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 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.

XIII. 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.

XIV. 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.

XV. Rubrics
A. Special Topic Conference Presentation Assignment:

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

1. Content (50%)
   A. Does paper have a well-defined topic?
   B. Does paper have adequate summary and discussion using assignment guidelines?
   C. Does paper contain thoughts and ideas based on research?
   D. Does paper address several perspectives on the topic?
   E. Does paper describe a treatment plan, interventions, and how to measure outcomes for couples counseling?

Examples of Points deducted for issues with content (50 points)
No central idea -15
Focus on the issue rather than application of possibilities in counseling couples -15
No description of treatment plan, interventions, and how to measure 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/audience 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?

Points deducted for issues with organization (20 points)
Introduction poorly constructed -3
Well-defined issue -3
No logical flow -3
No main theme per paragraph -3
Transitions missing or clumsy -3
Interventions 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/](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 (2-3 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. Gottman’s 17- Area Scale

**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**: Each student will take and self-score assessments and write about his/her personal experience or the experiences of an identified couple to complete this assignment. Students will develop intervention strategies to use in couple's counseling to assess couple's relationship and evaluate couple's counseling outcomes. Student’s will apply *Gottman’s 17-Area Scale*. Assessments and report will be included in the electronic portfolio. **Rubric**: Copies of Assessments (10 points), report covers all areas in *Gottman’s 17-Area Scale*. (10 points), and treatment plan clear with goals and objectives specified (10 points).
C. Cases and Role-plays

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). 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. Case should include:

1. Relevant societal trends and treatment issues
2. Relevant multicultural and diversity concerns
3. Identifiable interventions

Rubric and Guidelines for Case Conceptualization and Treatment plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 - 69%</th>
<th>70 – 79%</th>
<th>80 – 89%</th>
<th>90 – 100%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<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 may not be well constructed.</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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**


C. Special Topics 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).

Names of Students: _____________________________________________________________
Presentation Topic: ____________________________________________________________


_____1. Delivered orally in a clear and organized manner
_____2. Focused on the couple relationship
_____3. Covered fully the topic for selected problem/population
_____4. Included appropriate counseling strategies for selected problem/population
_____5. Addressed issues related to multicultural and diverse family systems
_____6. Provided information useful for counselors working with couples
_____7. Answered questions about problem/population asked by peer
_____8. Had relevant references and other resources
_____9. Produced a quality handout
_____10. Presented a professional demeanor and dress
Additional comments:

Rubric and Guidelines for Case Conceptualization and Treatment plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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