I. Course Description

CNEP 5320, Introduction to Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling provides an overview of major theoretical models, history of the field, key concepts, the family counseling process, family structure, and functions of marriage, couple, and family counseling. Course topics include professional, legal, ethical, and diversity issues.

II. Rationale

This course is designed to serve students in the marriage, couple, and family counseling program, school counseling program, clinical mental health counseling program, and graduate students in related fields. It is a required course for the MCFC Program and individuals seeking licensure as a marriage and family therapist.

III. Proficiencies for Counselors: State Adopted

A. School Counselor
   1. Learner-Centered Knowledge
   2. Learner-Centered Process
   3. Learner-Centered Responsive Services
   4. Learner-Centered Support System
   5. Learner-Centered Professional Development
   6. Equity in Excellence for all Learners

B. Professional Counselor (academic competencies by Texas State Board of Examiners of Licensed Professional Counselors)
   1. Counseling methods/techniques
   2. Social, cultural, and family issues
   3. Professional issues and ethics
   4. Counseling theory

C. Marriage and Family Therapist (academic areas required by Texas State Board of Examiners of Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists)
   1. Theoretical foundations
   2. Assessment and treatment
   3. Human development
   4. Establish and maintain appropriate networks
   5. Assess the outcome of treatment
   6. Maintain professional standards
IV. TExES Competencies

A. 001 Human Development
B. 002 Environment Influence
C. 003 Diversity
D. 006 Responsive Services
E. 007 Individual Planning
F. 010 School-Home Relationships
G. 011 School-Community Relationships
H. 012 Ethical, Legal, and Professional Standards

V. Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to help students meet the following CACREP/MCFC accreditation standards (objectives):

**CACREP 2016 Standards-Section 5: Entry-Level Specialty Areas- Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling**

CACREP Standard - F-1-a: history and development of marriage, couple, and family counseling

CACREP Standard - F-1-b: theories and models of family systems and dynamics

CACREP Standard - F-1-c: theories and models of marriage, couple, and family counseling

CACREP Standard - F-1-d: sociology of the family, family phenomenology, and family of origin theories

CACREP Standard - F-2-a: roles and settings of marriage, couple, and family counselors

CACREP Standard - F-2-b: structures of marriages, couples, and families

CACREP Standard - F-2-j: impact of unemployment, under-employment, and changes in socioeconomic standing on marriages, couples, and families

CACREP Standard - F-2-n: professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling

CACREP Standard - F-2-o: ethical and legal considerations and family law issues unique to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling

CACREP Standard - F-2-p: record keeping, third party reimbursement, and other practice and management considerations in marriage, couple, and family counseling

CACREP Standard - F-3-b: fostering family wellness

**Students will demonstrate meeting the above CACREP/MCFC accreditation standards (objectives) through the following Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students will demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of the history, philosophy, and trends in marriage, couple, and family counseling.  
(measured by a score of 80% or above on in class examinations covering the above topics. Measured by a rating of 20 or above on the assessment rubric utilized for the final examination).

Students will demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of the ethical and legal issues related to the
practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling.  
(measured by a score of 80% or above on in class examinations covering the above topics. Measured by a rating of 20 or above on the assessment rubric utilized for the final examination).

Students will demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of the roles and functions of marriage, couple, and family counselors in a variety of practice settings and in relation to other helping professions.  
(measured by a rating of 4 or above on the rubric used to evaluate the response to this essay question on the final examination).

Students will demonstrate the knowledge of professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling.  
(measured by a rating of 4 or above on the rubric used to evaluate the response to this essay question on the final examination).

Students will demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of a variety of models and theories of marriage, couple, and family counseling.  
(measured by a score of 80% or above on in class examinations covering models and theories. Measured by a rating of 20 or above on the rubric utilized to evaluate student presentations).

Students will demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of issues in marriage, couples, and family counseling, life-cycle-dynamics, healthy family functioning, family structures and family of origin in a multicultural society.  
(measured by a score of 80% or above in respective sections of the class examinations. Measured by a rating of 4 or above on the rubric used to evaluate response to essay questions in the above areas).

Students will demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of the current literature that relates to marriage, couple, and family counseling including efficacy of theories, approaches, strategies, and techniques in marriage, couples, and family counseling.  
(measured by a rating of 4 or above on the take home section of the final examination that addresses the literature review).

VI. Course Topics  
The major course topics to be considered are: historical and current theoretical foundations of marriage, couple and family counseling, orientation to the profession, family life cycle, interface of ethical practice and issues of diversity, and an emphasis on family counseling theories.

VII. Instructional Methods and Techniques  
Lecture, cooperative/interactive learning, video, on-line activities, assignments, case studies, and examinations are used in this course.

VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment  

A) Major Course Assignments  

Course Discussions Posts  

Each week you will be responsible for completing all assigned course readings and participating in small group and classroom discussions based on those readings. Guided discussion prompts will be posted to the course Blackboard discussion forum. Students will need to thoughtfully consider the topic or question presented, and author a response to be posted in the discussion forum on Blackboard that demonstrates their knowledge and understanding of the assigned reading material. In addition to their response, students will need to formulate at
least two questions regarding the reading that will be submitted through Blackboard prior to class each week. Students will also be expected to bring a hard copy of both their responses to the discussion posts as well as the questions formulated from the reading to class. The instructor will review all posts to determine whether students have met this requirement or not. Discussion posts will be evaluated based on the following items:

**Content** – Student demonstrates an in-depth understanding and application of concepts and issues presented in the course (e.g., insightful interpretations or analyses; accurate and perceptive parallels, ideas, opinions, and conclusions), showing that the student has absorbed the general principles and ideas presented; and postings/responses that are well-supported by pertinent research/evidence from a variety of and multiple peer-reviewed books and journals, where appropriate; and mastery and thoughtful/accurate application of skills or strategies presented in the course.

**Quality of writing** – Student uses language that is clear, concise, and appropriate; make few, if any, errors in spelling, grammar, and syntax; provide adequate information about a source when citing or paraphrasing it; and use a preponderance of original language and only directly quote when necessary and/or appropriate;

**Contributions to the discussion** – Student significantly contributes to the quality of the discussion by providing: rich and relevant examples; discerning and thought-provoking ideas; stimulating thoughts and probes; new perspectives; original and critical thinking; and are positive, courteous, and respectful when offering suggestions, constructive feedback, or opposing viewpoints.

Discussion board posts account for 100 points of your final grade.

**Weekly Online Quizzes**

Each week, a brief quiz will be posted to assess students’ understanding of the topics being discussed. The quizzes will be made available online through Blackboard, and will be available three days before class until 1 hour prior to the beginning of class. Quiz questions will be presented in multiple choice format, and only reflect the material discussed for the previous week (not cumulative). The use of notes and textbooks is allowed; however, students must work alone and not seek outside help from fellow classmates or other individuals. There will be ten quizzes available for students to take throughout the semester, with each quiz being worth 10 points. A total of 100 points are possible toward your final course grade.

**Professional Case Illustration Projects**

Throughout the semester a series of four (4) professional case illustration projects will be assigned to help you learn more about the role of the Marriage, Couple, and Family Counselor. These projects will require you to utilize the library, internet, local service providers, and national agencies. Submitted assignments will be evaluated on content as well as style. A more detailed description for each project is provided on the class Blackboard homepage under the assignment tab in each learning module. Each professional case illustration project is worth 100 points, resulting in a maximum of 400 points that can be earned on these assignments. These projects will be written in APA style format (minimum of three pages; maximum of five pages) with at least two professional (refereed) journal articles and/or professional books as references. All references are expected to be reported (e.g., journal articles, internet, local service providers, and national agencies. For each project students will be provided with a case illustration that they need to address including the following areas:

a. What is the presenting issue?

b. Probable diagnosis (i.e., according to DSM-V)

c. Treatment Plan

d. Additional resources the client may need
e. Identify the agency or organization that would be best suited for this client to receive services.

**Autobiography and Genogram Paper**

Students complete a genogram based on themselves and their family. The genogram will serve as a platform for writing your autobiography. Students will submit a paper regarding their life and family history including their genogram. This paper will be written in **APA style format** (minimum of eight pages; maximum of ten pages). A more detailed explanation of this assignment is located through our course page on Blackboard under the “assignments” tab. This paper will count for 200 points toward your final grade. The following sections will be included in the paper:

a. A brief introduction that informs the reader of key points that are addressed in the paper.
b. A summary of the main points highlighted in the genogram
   i. patterns
   ii. themes
c. A description of your personality
   i. Which family factors identified through the genogram have influenced your personality development
d. A description of how you view yourself, others, and the world
   i. Identify which family factors have been influential to how you view yourself, others, and the world.
e. A description of any major event(s) that occurred in your family
   i. Discuss how this impacted you and your family.
f. A description of which family theory would best address unresolved issues in your family
   i. Identify the main tenants of the theory
   ii. Role of the counselor
   iii. Assessment(s) to utilize
   iv. Treatment Plan (Goals & interventions) for your family
   v. Identify any additional resources that may be helpful
g. A discussion of how the information influences
   i. How you view family issues
   ii. your work as a future Marriage, Couple, and Family counselor

*It is strongly recommended that students review the APA Publication Manual prior to and throughout the writing process*

**Panel Reflection Paper**

A panel of Professional Counselors from various settings will visit the class to discuss their work (e.g., role, identity, what a typical day might look like, paperwork, etc.). Students will formulate questions to ask the panel. Following the panel visit, students will write a 2-3 page reflection paper about the experience. The Panel Reflection Paper will count for 100 points toward your total grade. This paper will include:

a. A brief introduction of the key points gleaned from the interview that will be further discussed throughout the paper.
b. A summary of what you learned about
   a. counselor identity
   b. what a typical day may be like for a counselor
   c. the various roles a counselor may fill
   d. challenges counselors face
   e. how to best prepare yourself to be a counselor

**B) Point Allocation**

Weekly Online Quizzes (10 @ 10 points each) 100 points
Course Discussion Posts (10 @ 10 points/week) 100 points
Professional Case Illustration Projects (4 @ 100 points each) 400 points
Panel Reflection Paper 100 points
Autobiography & Genogram 200 points
Final Examination 100 points

TOTAL 1000 points

C) Grade Distribution

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>900-1000</td>
<td>800-899</td>
<td>700-799</td>
<td>600-699</td>
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IX. Course Schedule and Policies

Spring 2016 Course Schedule: (Tentative—may change based upon students’ learning and material needed to be added)

A.) Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Readings and Exams</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/24/17</td>
<td>Overview of class, individual and family life cycles, healthy family functioning, family structures, and issues in a multicultural society</td>
<td>Chapters 1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/31/17</td>
<td>Rationale, history, philosophy, and trends in MCFC are covered in this class. In addition, professional organizations, preparation standards, and professional credentialing are covered. Quiz 1</td>
<td>Chapters 3, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/7/17</td>
<td>The process of couple and family counseling is covered, including the role and functions of couple and family counselors. Quiz 2 Case Illustration Project 1 Due</td>
<td>Chapters 2, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/14/17</td>
<td>Psychodynamic and Bowenian family approaches; family of origin and intergenerational influences in a multicultural society Quiz 3</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/21/17</td>
<td>Experiential family approaches; Quiz 4</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/28/17</td>
<td>Behavioral and cognitive-behavioral family approaches; Quiz 5 Case Illustration Project 2 Due</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/7/17</td>
<td>Structural family therapy Quiz 6</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/14/17</td>
<td>NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/21/17</td>
<td>Strategic and systemic family approaches</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Quiz 7</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/28/17</td>
<td>Solution-Focused and Narrative family approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Autobiography and Genogram Due</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/4/17</td>
<td>Working with single-parent</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Case Illustration Project 3 Due</em></td>
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<td><em>Quiz 8</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/11/17</td>
<td>Working with remarried families</td>
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<td><em>Panel Visit</em></td>
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<td>4/18/17</td>
<td>Working with culturally diverse families</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Panel Reflection Paper Due</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Quiz 9</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/25/17</td>
<td>Working with substance-related disorders, domestic violence, and child abuse in families, families in crises</td>
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<td><em>Quiz 10</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Case Illustration Project 4 Due</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>5/2/17</td>
<td>Ethical, legal, and professional issues in MCFC; Research and assessments in MCFC, effective MCFC strategies' theories, and assessment tools and techniques when working with diverse family systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/9/17</td>
<td><em>Final Examination</em></td>
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**B) Course Policies**

**Attendance & Participation**
Students will attend **ALL** scheduled classes, more than two absences will deduct one letter grade; missing more than 30 minutes of a class meeting will be considered an absence. Students will participate in course activities (both in and out of class) in a cooperative manner, complete homework assignments in a timely fashion, as well as remain receptive to feedback provided by the instructor and teaching assistant. **Cell Phones**: Turn your cell phones off during class meetings. If you need to have this device on for a relevant reason, please consult with instructor prior to class.

**Professionalism**
By enrolling in a graduate program you have begun your professional career. As such, the expectation is that you will conduct yourself as a professional. A significant part of being a professional is being respectful to your peers and instructor at all times. Examples of disrespectful and unprofessional behavior in a face-to-face class include: talking in class, not paying attention, criticizing others’ thoughts and beliefs, falling asleep, or texting/talking on a phone. These same behaviors can be found in online classes as well, especially when participating in class discussion boards. While it is understandable that there may be times when you are not in total agreement with your peers or instructor, respect for the academic environment should **always** be acknowledged. Good advice would be to reread your posts before uploading them, to see if they may be disrespectful or hurtful to others.

**Statement of Civility**
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the
state. The University’s goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. To assist in meeting this goal, you are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state, and federal government. You are expected to behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people; regardless of gender, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, age, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Late Submissions of Student Work
One added challenge to attending graduate school coursework is that many students have families, work part or full-time jobs, and have to negotiate a number of responsibilities outside of the classroom. As a faculty member I acknowledge that it is understandable that life circumstances may take precedence to your school work and encourage you to plan, when possible, the turning in of your assignments and completion of course activities in the event that you should have to miss class. As a policy, all assignments are to be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Any work turned in will be subjected to a letter grade deduction for each day that the assignment is late with no assignments being accepted after the second day late.

Extra Credit
As a general rule, extra credit opportunities will not be extended in this course. Course grades should be reflective of the proficiency level students are able to demonstrate through all course assignments and assessments. Requests to award additional points without just cause or to assign alternative/additional work for credit will be denied.

Academic Integrity and 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, forgery, or plagiarism (plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one's own work).

Disciplinary action for academic misconduct is the responsibility of the faculty member assigned to the course. The faculty member is charged with assessing the gravity of any case of academic dishonesty, and with giving sanction to any student involved. Penalties that the instructor might possibly apply to individual cases of academic dishonesty include:

- Written reprimand
- Requirement to re-do work in question
- Requirement to submit additional work
- Lowering of grade on work in question
- Assigning grade of "F" to work in question
- Assigning grade of "F" for course
- Recommendation for more severe punishment, such as dismissal from program or University

If the faculty member determines that assigning a grade of "F" to the course is the appropriate penalty and this disciplinary action occurs prior to the deadline for dropping courses, the student forfeits his/her right to drop the course in question.

If the faculty member recommends more severe punishment, such as dismissal from the program or from the University, the faculty member will notify the appropriate chair/college dean, who in turn will notify the Office of Student Affairs. If dismissal from the University is recommended, the Office of Student Affairs will follow its procedure for such cases.
The faculty member must file a record for each case of academic dishonesty, including a description of the disciplinary action taken, along with any materials involved, with his or her college dean, who will forward a copy to the Office of Student Affairs. The office of the academic dean of the college in which the offense took place will maintain records of all cases of academic dishonesty reported for a period of five years. The Office of Student Affairs will also maintain records of such cases for a period of five years. The Office of Student Affairs will inform the Graduate Dean as appropriate.

Any student who has been penalized for academic dishonesty has the right to appeal the judgment or the penalty assessed. Students who wish to appeal an academic dishonesty decision should contact the Office of Student Affairs for guidance on the appropriate steps for initiating the process.

**Dropping a Class**

My hope is that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class during your program of study. With that being said, I realize events sometimes occur that make dropping a course a necessary and wise decision. If you ever find yourself in a situation like this, I ask that you consult with me before you decide to drop the course to be sure it is your best option. Should dropping the course prove to be the best action for you to take, it is your responsibility to initiate the drop process by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Simply discontinuing your attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class, and a final grade will be issued.

**Communication**

Each TAMUCC student has access to an individual e-mail account assigned to them by the university. This is the primary method through which your instructor will communicate with you throughout the semester. At the beginning of the course, students should make sure they have activated their account and make plans to check the account regularly. Students can expect to receive a response to their queries from their instructor within 48 hours (excluding weekends and university-recognized holidays).

**Syllabus Disclaimer:**

While the provisions of this syllabus are as accurate and complete as possible, the instructor reserves the right to change any provisions herein, with notice if circumstances so warrant. Every effort will be made to keep students advised of such changes and information about such changes will be available at all times from the instructor. It is the responsibility of each student to know what changes, if any, have been made to the provisions of this syllabus and to successfully complete the requirements of this course. Questions regarding information on the syllabus and course requirements need to be addressed by students when the syllabus is received.

**X. Textbook Required for this course**


**XI. Bibliography**


XII. Grade Appeals

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, 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 Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules website at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

XIII. Disability 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 Driftwood 101.

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.

XIV. Academic Continuity

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.