I. Course Description
This online course is designed to familiarize students with intimate relationships, marriage, and the assessment of couple relationship assessments. Topics include marital/couple counseling, sexuality, societal trends, roles, gender, diversity, premarital counseling, and preventive approaches. Pre-requisite: CNEP 5384.

II. Rationale
This is a core course for individuals interested in marriage and family counseling and therapy. Graduates from counseling and closely related programs are invited to enroll in order to increase their skills in counseling couples.

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 2016 CACREP marriage, couple, and family counseling standards:

A. CACREP MCFC Standard F-1-c: theories and models of marriage, couple, and family counseling
B. CACREP MCFC Standard F-1-e: principles and models of assessment and case conceptualization from a systems perspective
C. CACREP MCFC Standard F-1-f: assessments relevant to marriage, couple, and family counseling
D. CACREP MCFC Standard F-2-b: structures of marriages, couples, and families
E. CACREP MCFC Standard F-2-e: human sexuality and its effect on couple and family functioning
F. CACREP MCFC Standard F-2-g: impact of crisis and trauma on marriages, couples, and families
G. CACREP MCFC Standard F-2-i: impact of interpersonal violence on marriages, couples, and families
H. CACREP MCFC Standard F-2-o: ethical and legal considerations and family law issues unique to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling
I. CACREP MCFC Standard F-3-c: techniques and interventions of marriage, couple, and family counseling
J. CACREP MCFC Standard F-3-d: conceptualizing and implementing treatment, planning, and intervention strategies in marriage, couple, and family counseling
K. CACREP MCFC Standard F-3-e: strategies for interfacing with the legal system relevant to marriage, couple, and family counseling

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of the course students will:
1. Demonstrate the ability to utilize models of assessment and formulate appropriate case conceptualizations from a systems perspective, utilizing marriage and couple assessments (CACREP MCFC Standards F.1.e and F.1.f). Successful achievement of this learning outcome will be demonstrated by 80% of students earning a B or above on the case study/case conceptualization and assessments assignments.

2. Demonstrate understanding of the impact of interpersonal violence on marriage and couple relationships and appropriately assess risks and devise intervention strategies (CACREP MCFC Standard F.2.1) Successful achievement of this learning outcome will be demonstrated by 80% of students responding correctly to 80% of examination materials regarding interpersonal violence and 80% of students earning a B or above on the discussion board thread regarding interpersonal violence.

3. Assess the impact of sexuality on marital and couple relationships and formulate appropriate intervention strategies to enhance sexual satisfaction in those relationships (CACREP MCFC Standard F.2.e). Achievement is evidenced by 80% of students earning a B or above on the examination materials regarding sexuality in couple relationships and on the discussion board thread regarding sexuality in couple relationships.

4. Illustrate the ability to utilize ethical codes as well as consider legal and family law issues unique to the practice of marital and couple counseling (CACREP MCFC Standard F.2.o). Achievement of this learning outcome will be evidenced by 80% of students earning a grade of 80% or above on examination materials regarding ethical and legal issues in couple counseling, addressing legal and ethical considerations in the poster presentation, and earning a B above on the discussion thread regarding legal, ethical, and family law issues.

5. Assess cultural factors relevant to marital and couple functioning (CACREP MCFC Standards F.2.m). Achievement of this learning outcome will be evidenced by 80% of students earning a grade of B or above on the case study and poster presentation.

VI. Course Topics
The major topics to be covered are: legal and ethical standards, human sexuality and the couple relationship, research relevant to couple and family counseling, evidence-based practice strategies, assessment of couple relationships, the Gottman approach to couples therapy, and development/use of outcome assessment.

VII. Instructional Methods and Activities
This course combines online discussion, demonstration, and experiential activities to facilitate student learning. Each student is expected to contribute to course learning by actively participating in the discussion forums and online activities. Students will have access to and are required to utilize Gottman’s Level 1 videos and manual. Instructions for accessing the videos from the Gottman Institute will be provided in BlackBoard. Students are required to watch all 6 videos and should plan for each to last between 1.5 and 2.0 hours.

VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment (All assignments must be submitted on BlackBoard unless otherwise noted.)

A. Methods of evaluation and criteria for grade assignments are as follows:
1. Examinations: There are mid-term and final examinations covering assigned readings and videos. These exams will be given through BlackBoard. Each examination is worth 50 points. See the Assignments folder in the Content area of BlackBoard. **Examinations will not be accepted past the due date and time. (100 points)**

2. Assessments: Students will complete the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test, the Weiss-Cerreto Marital Status Inventory, and the Gottman 19-Areas Scale. Take and self-score the instruments. Write about the experience of taking the assessments and explain how each might be used in conjunction with a clinical interview and/or other assessments to help couples examine their relationships. Discuss how responses to individual questions might serve as a basis for discussion. Be specific! Discuss contraindications for using each tool. Include consideration of usefulness of the assessment with diverse couples. Follow the guidelines presented in the rubric found within the syllabus. There is not a minimum page requirement; however, all points in the rubric must be covered. You are strongly encouraged to use your current or a previous committed relationship. If you have never been in a committed relationship or prefer not to use a real relationship, you may use a case study-style approach in which you imagine yourself in a committed relationship. The paper must be submitted via the Assignments folder in the Content area of BlackBoard. **(30 points)**

   *Please do not ask your partner to take the assessments, whether as a point of interest or as a way of working on your own relationships outside of a personal counseling setting in which you are involved. There are potential risks as well as possible ethical implications of you doing so.*

3. Case Study and Case Conceptualization: Students will **individually** develop a case study on a specific couple problem or special couple population (e.g. aging/retirement, bicultural couples, intimate partner violence, infertility problems, multi problem couples, military couples, couples impacted by economic conditions, unemployment, pre-marital counseling, remarriage issues, same sex couples, dual career couples, medical and psychiatric issues impacting couples, couples and chronic or terminal illness of one partner or of a child etc.). Follow the rubric found within the syllabus for more instructions. Obtain professor approval of topic so there will be no duplications. The case study should include references from professional venues. **See assignment 4. If there is a different couple problem or special population that you wish to address, please check with instructor prior to doing the work.** Only topics addressing couple issues are acceptable. **(50 points)**

4. Research Articles: Students will discuss two relevant research articles. A sample reference list of appropriate articles is included in this syllabus. Other articles may be utilized; however, consult with the professor before using. **(Total of 30 points as indicated below)**

   a. Discussion of article #1 is a simple review of the article in which students will cite and consider 10 statements from the article and discuss how each statement helps their understanding of couples. The APA-styled citation for the article must be provided in the paper. **(10 points-due 07/09, 11:59p.m.)**

   b. For article #2, write a detailed critique addressing the elements outlined in the rubric included in this syllabus. Utilize the rubric included in this syllabus as the outline for the paper and ensure that all elements are included. Page limits are determined by completion of all required information. **Article #2 should be one of the references utilized in your case study (see assignment 3). (20 points)**
5. Quizzes: Students will complete five (5) quizzes through BlackBoard. Each is worth 10 points. Due dates appear in the schedule. Two opportunities to take each quiz will be provided, with the highest grade being recorded. Quizzes are time-limited. **Quizzes will not be accepted past due date and time.** (50 points)

6. Poster Presentation: Students will use their case studies as part of a poster presentation that will be submitted through BlackBoard to the entire class. In addition to material from the case study, information regarding the particular couple population or issue you have chosen for your case study must be included that presents research and conceptual material from the literature about your particular population/issue. Address ethical and legal considerations that may be important when working with this population/issue as well as cultural factors that may have an impact on this population/issue. Provide bibliographic information regarding resources used. **A brief literature overview must be added.** Use a PowerPoint Format to create 10-15 slides that encapsulate the literature review as well as your case study/case conceptualization. You will have more information on slides that if you were giving a presentation in front of an audience! Poster Presentations will be posted in the Discussion Board section specified for this purpose. **(40 points)**

7. Students will complete and respond to 5 discussion board prompts as indicated by each discussion request. Instructions for posts (see BlackBoard) should be carefully reviewed for information about expectations for posts and timing thereof. **(50 points)** *Please note: Some forums will require some sharing of personal information. The extent to which you use your own current, past, or partially fictionalized relationships is up to you. Please be aware that your peers and I will be reading these discussions, and do not reveal more than you are comfortable being known by those of us reading. If you have concerns about any of the forums, please contact me directly via my university email as soon as possible! All participants are expected to keep their peers’ information confidential. This is an ethical issue and will be treated as such.*

8. **Sign-In Sheet for Level One Training Completion for Gottman Institute:** Students must arrange with course professor or teaching assistant to sign in and out at the beginning and end of the semester to obtain certification for Gottman Level One training. **If you do not sign at both the beginning and end of the semester, while you may receive credit for this course, you will not be certified for the level one training despite all the work you’ve done for the certification during the semester.**

**B. Methods of Evaluation and Final Course Grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards (5)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (5)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations (2)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments (3)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Articles</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster Presentation</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>350</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Scale**

A = 315-350; B = 280-314; C = 245-279; D = 210-244; F = 243 and below
IX. **Course Schedule and Policies**

A. **Tentative Course Schedule and Assignments**  
(Changes can be made at faculty discretion)

Please note: **The schedule is set up according to due dates rather than class dates.** Because this is an on-line course, students are able to set their own schedules for reading, viewing videos, and completing discussion board and quiz assignments as long as due dates are met. The course lasts approximately 5 weeks, so multiple topics should be covered each week as you are planning your time. Topics and readings are shown only as a way to keep on track with completing material needed for quizzes, discussion boards, examinations, and other assignments. Suggested start dates for videos are simply recommendations for the date by which students should begin each. All videos will be available throughout the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07/03</td>
<td>Myths &amp; Mistakes of Marital Therapy</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin viewing <a href="#">Video Part 1</a>, with associated manual material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/06</td>
<td>Repair and the Core Triad of Balance</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Sound Marital House: A Theory of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin working on Research Article #1</td>
<td>Begin working on Research Article #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/08</td>
<td>Begin viewing <a href="#">Video Part 2</a> and associated manual material no later than this point</td>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Board 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/10</td>
<td>Begin viewing <a href="#">Video Part 3</a> and associated manual material no later than this point</td>
<td>Research Article 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Disasters and Masters of Marriage</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Response 1</td>
</tr>
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<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/14</td>
<td>Begin viewing <a href="#">Video Part 4</a> and associated manual material no later than this point</td>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Board 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/15</td>
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<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/18</td>
<td>Assumptions and Interventions Overview</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing the Marital Friendship</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin viewing <a href="#">Video Part 5</a> and associated manual material no later than this point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/19</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
<td>Mid-Term Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/20</td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin viewing Video Part 6 and associated manual material no later than this point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/22</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz 3 Discussion Board 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/23</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
<td>Research Article 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Solving What Is Solvable</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Living with the Inevitable</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin viewing Video Part 7 and associated manual material no later than this point</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapters 8 and 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/26</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
<td>Life Dreams and Shared Meanings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Case Study &amp; Case Conceptualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/27</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
<td>Resistance to Change</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Response 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/28</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
<td>Begin viewing Video Part 8 and associated manual material no later than this point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz 4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Avoiding Relapse</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Putting It All Together: Working as a Team and Terminating Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotion and Meta-emotion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Buffering Children from Marital Conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/30</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/31</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Quiz 5 Discussion Board 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/02</td>
<td>11:59 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. Class policies**

This is an on-line course. An on-line course does *not* require fewer hours than a face-to-face course. It does allow you to schedule your time as best suits your needs within specific parameters for due dates. What this means, practically speaking, is that you will spend as much time working on this course as you would any other course in which you are required to both attend classes and complete assignments (e.g., reading, examinations, homework). The videos you are required to watch account for approximately 10 hours, which is less than 1/3 the time you would spend in a face-to-face class. The remainder of the assignments, including readings, examinations, case studies, etc., will require more time than you may
normally spend outside of face-to-face class time. This is the nature of on-line coursework given that you are spending no time face-to-face in the classroom.

Please consult with me or the teaching assistant if you have difficulty or questions. The easiest way to do that is to email me or the TA via our regular university emails and either ask your question(s) or set up an appointment. While we will both be monitoring and interacting in BlackBoard on a regular basis, regular university email is something I monitor most of the time M-F and is therefore quickest. I encourage you to contact us earlier in the semester rather than later if you find yourself having difficulty. The further along we are in the semester, the more difficult it will for you to make any adjustments that may be needed.

My expectation is that reading and video assignments will be completed in a timely manner and that you will be prepared to participate in discussion forums that are set up. Please attend to the grading rubrics in this syllabus. The rubrics will give you information you need regarding how assignments will be assessed.

Quizzes and examinations must be completed on time and will not be accepted late. Other late work will be penalized 10% (e.g., 1 pt. for a 10-pt. assignment), and no work will be accepted after the second day. Written work will use APA (6th ed.) format (12 pt. font, double spaced, 5-space indentions for paragraphs, 1-inch margins, title page, etc.).

Academic honesty must be observed, and plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty, including inappropriate collaboration on individual work, will result in a 0 for that work, filing of academic dishonesty paperwork with the appropriate university office, and a failing grade in the course. Incomplete grade requests, in accordance with College of Education and Human Development policy, are granted only in extraordinary circumstances and must be requested in advance by the student. Please be aware that the Gottman videos will not be available once the course ends; therefore, there is no way to complete any assignments related to video content once the course has ended.

X. Required textbook and video recordings


Level 1 Clinical Training (Manual and Videos) Gottman Method Couples Therapy. The Gottman Institute. (This material will be provided in class and is covered by course fees.)

XI. Supplemental reading and references


**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 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 Office of Student Affairs.

XIII. 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. 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. Emergency Contingency Plan
In the event of a campus evacuation I will make every effort to continue teaching your course. Should such an event occur, I will continue to interact with you by using the Blackboard Announcement, Bb Messages, Email, Collaboration, Discussions, Blogs, Journals, and/or Wikis tools. If you have access to the Internet, you will be able to continue your coursework by posting assignments and interacting with me as well as each other online. You will also be able to take your tests online using the Assessments tool and see your grades on assignments, quizzes, and tests using the My Grades tool.

XIV. Rubrics

Assessments Assignment

ASSIGNMENT: Take and self-score the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test, the Weiss-Cerreto Marital Status Inventory, and the Gottman 19-Areas Scale. Write about your experience of taking EACH assessments and explain how you might use EACH 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 tool? Reflect on usefulness of the tool 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.

Your paper will be graded according to these guidelines:

1. Content (60%)
   A. Are all the elements of the assignment addressed fully?
   B. Does paper have a central idea that can be expressed in 1 or 2 simple sentences?
   C. Does paper have adequate summary and discussion using assignment guidelines?
   D. Does paper contain thoughts and ideas based on your test results?
   E. Does paper address several perspectives?
   E. Does paper describe how assessments 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 (up to 5 points, article 1; 10, article 2)
No central idea -1
Focus on the test rather than application possibilities in counseling couples -2
No description of how assessments could be useful in formulating a treatment plan, selecting interventions and treatments, and measuring outcomes for couples counseling -2
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 assessments well integrated into the flow of the paper?

   An answer of “no” to any of the above could result in a 1-point deduction, with a maximum of 2 points, article 1; 4 points, article 2.

3. **Grammar and style (10%)**
   A. Are there grammatical or spelling problems?
   B. Is the writing style clear?
   C. Is word choice simple and straightforward?
   D. Are sentences cohesive?

   Certain grammar errors are unacceptable 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. Grammatical errors, lack of clear writing that is easy to understand, poor word choice, and other style issues may result in point deductions (article 1, 1 pt.; article 2, 2 pts.) **Papers containing more than six grammatical errors will be returned to be revised and resubmitted with the best possible grade for revision being 90%**.

4. **Required formatting as specified by APA 6th edition (10%)**
   One useful source for APA 6th edition style is [http://owl1.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1/](http://owl1.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

   **Failure to follow any of the above standards may result in a deduction of 1-2 points.**

**Article #2 Critique**

**ASSIGNMENT:** Choose an effectiveness research article (see outcome and effectiveness articles at the end of the syllabus) relevant to the population on which you are basing your case study. Provide a brief summary (2-4 sentences) of the article, and then address the following:

1. identified problem (if not clearly stated in the article, so indicate)
2. purpose of the study (if not clearly stated in the article, so indicate)
3. very brief synopsis of the literature review (comment on usefulness of review)
4. very brief explanation of the basic research design
5. description of the sample (who were the participants?)
6. inclusion of diversity and multiculturalism issues (if not addressed, so indicate)
7. brief explanation of how data was analyzed
8. results of study and how findings answer the research question(s) and purpose
9. how results inform the practice of counseling
   a. how study is important or not important to couple counseling practice
   b. how results of study can be used in a practical way by counselors to evaluate couple counseling outcomes or why it is not practically useful
   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? Why?
    d. What is your overall assessment of this research article?

The assignment will be based on the following rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 – 69% (13 pts and below)</th>
<th>70 – 79% (14-15 pts)</th>
<th>80 – 89% (16-17 pts)</th>
<th>90 – 100% (18-20 pts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does not include required aspects of the assignment; coverage indicates lack of understanding of article; poorly written, with failure to follow APA style, serious writing mistakes, poorly constructed sentences and paragraphs. Poor use of APA style.</td>
<td>Includes most elements of assignment; however, responses are vague or demonstrate limited understanding of content of article. Writing is unclear or difficult to follow; mistakes in writing or failure to edit; awkward construction. Several APA style errors.</td>
<td>Thoughtful consideration of most of the aspects of assignment; while generally well-written, may not be clear in each area; some ideas may not be well-developed; some errors in writing; APA style followed.</td>
<td>Thorough and thoughtful consideration of all aspects of assignment; reflects clear understanding of the article; well-written; few or no writing errors; ideas well developed and well-written; APA style well-executed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Case Study and Conceptualization**

**ASSIGNMENT: Individually** develop a case study on a specific couple problem or special population (e.g. aging/retirement, bicultural couples, domestic violence, infertility problems, multi problem couples, military couples, couples impacted by economic conditions, unemployment, pre-marital counseling, remarriage issues, same sex couples, dual career couples, medical and psychiatric issues impacting couples, couples dealing with immigration issues, couples and chronic or terminal illness of a child etc.). Additional specific problems or populations may be considered; however, all topics must be cleared through the professor to avoid significant repetition of case types. The case study must include a clear description of the case, case conceptualization, and treatment plan consistent with Gottman’s Method Couples Therapy.

**Case Study:** Describe your couple. Give demographic information, background information relevant to the case, presenting problem, history of the problem, any assessment information you may have given (assume you have completed the first conjoint and both individual assessment sessions in Gottman’s assessment phase and have used some of the assessments provided. Explain any contextual or multicultural/diversity issues relevant to the case. Be sure that your case is consistent with your population or identified specific problem. Provide information from the assessments. Feel free to use the Clinician’s Checklist for Couple Assessment (5-5) from
your manual as your guide for this portion (including copying it, completing it for your “mythical” couple, and inserting it into your case study rather than writing a narrative for portions covered by the Checklist).

**Case Conceptualization:** Using your case study and assessment information, provide a case conceptualization. First, explain what is going on in a narrative format – in other words, discuss how you perceive what is going on based on the information you have provided in the case study. Then, discuss your approach for dealing with issues and problems identified. Include identification of goals (assume for the purposes of this assignment that your couple has collaborated and agreed with the goals) relevant for your couple based on Gottman’s method (see Manual, section 6.3), being sure to include goals that fit under each of the three broad goals in your manual (Modify Conflict, Enhance Friendship/Intimacy, Create Shared Meaning). The goals should be relevant to your particular case study. Then discuss interventions that might be used to meet those goals, again drawing from Gottman’s method. Include the theoretical perspectives with which the interventions are consistent (see Gottman’s Sound Relationship House Theory, 1.1.1 in your manual). There should be a clear connection between your case study and assessments, goals, and interventions. Explain the connections! Discuss potential roadblocks and how the clinician can prepare couples to deal with them. Also discuss how both the counselor and couple will know when goals have been reached or when termination is appropriate, including how you could help the couple address any anxiety about termination as well as plan for celebration of successes.

**Note:** While it is not desirable to be redundant in your writing or to use excessive words to fill space, it is important that you demonstrate that you understand the concepts in Gottman’s method and that you know, theoretically, how these fit together. That means that you must explain yourself. **Examples might include saying why you chose certain assessments, why the goals you’ve listed are important or relevant for this particular couple, what is important about the interventions you have chosen in terms of how they fit with the goals as well as with your particular couple. Do not give us the instructions for Gottman’s interventions** – instead, tell us what the intervention is intended to do and why it fits with your case.

Your assignment will be assessed based on the following rubric:

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<td>Poor case description and/or conceptualization that does not closely follow above guidelines; discussion inaccurate or poorly grounded in course materials; no evidence of ability to link case description, conceptualization, goals, and intervention; little evidence of understanding of the approach; poor writing with multiple style and grammar errors; paper generally difficult to understand.</td>
<td>Case study and/or case conceptualization may be vague or lacking key elements of assignment; connection between and among case study description, goals, and interventions lack clarity or explanation; while some evidence of understanding of the approach may be present, it is limited; errors in grammar and style.</td>
<td>Thoughtful case study that includes the majority of elements outlined in the assignment; detailed conceptualization that is largely consistent with the case study description; rationale for assessments, goals, and interventions is clear though may not be well-explained; addresses cultural and diversity issues; grounded in course materials; some errors in grammar and style. Overall, may be vague on some elements</td>
<td>Detailed and thoughtful case study that includes all elements outlined in assignment; detailed conceptualization that is consistent with the case study description; rationale for conceptualization, assessments, goals, and interventions is clear; grounded in course materials; addresses cultural and diversity issues; well-written, with few errors in grammar and style.</td>
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Assignment: Students will use their case studies as part of a poster presentation that will be submitted through BlackBoard to the entire class. In addition to material from the case study, information regarding the particular population or issue you have chosen for your case study must be included that presents research and conceptual material from the literature about your particular population/issue. Address ethical and legal considerations that may be important when working with this population/issue as well as cultural factors that may have an impact on this population/issue. Provide bibliographic information regarding resources used. A brief literature overview must be added. Use a PowerPoint Format to create 10-15 slides that encapsulate the literature review as well as your case study/case conceptualization. You will have more information on slides than if you were giving a presentation in front of an audience!

Your assignment will be assessed based on the following rubric:

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<td>1. Information appropriately focused on the couple relationship</td>
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<td>2. Coverage of selected problem/population</td>
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<td>3. Inclusion of appropriate counseling strategies and interventions for selected problem/population</td>
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<td>5. Usefulness of information for counselors working with couples</td>
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<td>7. Relevance of references and other resources</td>
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<td>8. Evidence of research (in library and or community) necessary to present accurate and helpful information</td>
<td>_____8.</td>
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Sample Outcome and Effectiveness Research Articles for Couples Counseling


Bradbury, T. N., Fincham, F. D., & Beach, S. R. H. (2000). Research on the nature and


Halford, W. K., Petch, J., & Creedy, D. K. (2010). Promoting a positive transition to parenthood:


Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 77, 243-256.
exploratory qualitative analysis. *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy, 4*(1), 23-49.


