

**Argosy University**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**PC6320/6330**  
**Domestic Violence and Spousal Abuse AND**  
**Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting**

**Summer I**  
**May 9 – June 29, 2009**

**Weekends: 9-6 May 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> and June 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Faculty Information:**

**Faculty Name:** Maria St. John, Ph.D., MFT

**Campus:** San Francisco Bay Area

**Contact Information:** [maria.st.john@ucsf.edu](mailto:maria.st.john@ucsf.edu); (415) 206-3752

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Faculty Bios:**

Dr. St. John is an interdisciplinary scholar and clinician who has worked with children and families in community mental health settings for the past eighteen years, specializing in infant and early childhood mental health. She has taught at the University of California, San Francisco; University of California, Berkeley; San Francisco State University; and New College of California, where she served as Chair of the Feminist Clinical Emphasis within the School of Graduate Psychology. In addition to teaching at Argosy, Dr. St. John is currently Visiting Assistant Professor at Mills College in the Department of Psychology and Assistant Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at UCSF, where she serves as Director of Training of the UCSF Infant-Parent Program.

Sections of this course are co-taught by Guest Instructor Robin Silverman, JD, Ph.D.. Dr. Silverman is a psychologist with a law degree who works as a child custody mediator with the Alameda County Superior Court. Dr. Silverman has worked with children, adolescents and families in mental health and family court settings for the past 20 years.

**Course Description:**

This is a single, blended course addressing the course content for Domestic Violence and Spousal Abuse together with the course content for Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting in an integrated fashion. It is not possible to take these two courses separately.

This course examines intimate violence from a psychodynamic ecosystemic perspective, examining intrapsychic, interpersonal and broader social and cultural contributors to intimate violence. Clinical and legal issues regarding child abuse and neglect, intimate partner and elder abuse will be introduced, with focus on working collaterally with other systems and providers as needed. The three court systems involved in adjudicating intimate violence issues will be discussed, with consideration of the possible roles for mental health professionals in assisting individuals and families navigating these systems. The issue of intergenerational transmission of violent relational patterns will be the central focus throughout. Assessment and treatment

considerations, cultural and diversity factors, social and political structures, community prevention and treatment efforts, and mandatory reporting will be addressed.

**Course Pre-requisites:** None

**Final Date to Drop the Class:**

To receive a “W” grade a student must officially drop this class by the date listed below that corresponds to this course’s term and length (indicated by bold type). Students may not withdraw from this course after the date this date. If a student chooses to discontinue course work after the final drop date, the student may receive an “F” grade for the course.

Summer Session I (7.5 week courses): June 11, 2009

Summer Session II (7.5 week courses): August 3, 2009

Summer Full Term (15 week courses): July 14, 2009

**Required Texts:**

Barnett, O.W., Miller-Perrin, C.L., & Perrin, R.D. (2004). *Family violence across the lifespan: An introduction*. Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. ISBN 0-7619-2755-7.

Lieberman, A.F. & Van Horn, P. (2005). *Don't hit my mommy! A manual for child-parent psychotherapy with young witnesses of family violence*. Washington DC: Zero to Three Press. ISBN 978-0-943657 -84-4.

Lough,P. (2003). The California child abuse & neglect reporting law: Issues and answers for mandated reporters. California Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention. Available at the CA Dept. of Social Services web site.

**Technology:** Internet Access; Microsoft Word; Adobe Acrobat (full version); Norton Anti-virus  
Note: All assignments submitted electronically must be in Word 97-2003 format. The document should say .doc at the end. If it ends in .docx or any other format it may be un-openable by the instructor, in which case it cannot be accepted and the assignment will receive no credit.

**Course length:** 7.5 Weeks

**Contact Hours:** 45 Hours

**Credit Value:** 3.0

**Program Outcomes: Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology**

**Program Outcome One: Professional Practice**

**Competency 1: Assessment and Skills**

Formulate assessments of psychological functioning and apply therapeutic intervention strategies when working with individuals, couples, families, and groups, toward the development of optimal mental health.

**Competency 2: Theory**

Interpret and apply psychological and developmental theories to therapeutic intervention strategies.

**Competency 3: Writing**

Employ media and technology when presenting counseling information orally and in writing, so that the presentation is concise, organized, well supported, professional, and appropriate to the audience.

**Program Outcome Two: Research**

**Competency 1:** Analyze research, and translate research findings for improvement of counseling services using statistics and program evaluation methods.

**Program Outcome Three: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Professional Development**

**Competency 1:** Students will develop positive relationship skills that promote personal and professional development via effective communication, encouragement, empathy, respect for others, self-awareness, and other-awareness.

- a. Apply active listening communication skills in interpersonal scenarios to establish empathetic relationships.
- b. Analyze the importance of effective nonverbal communication skills in interpersonal relationships.
- c. Solicit and utilize feedback to build and maintain interpersonal relationships.

**Program Outcome Four: Ethics**

**Competency 1:** Using the American Counseling Association's Standards of Practice /or the American Psychological Association's Ethical Code, as well as, and local state law as it applies to the behavior of mental health professionals, identify ethical dilemmas and apply ethical decision-making strategies while engaging in professional activities.

**Program Outcome Five: Diversity**

**Competency 1: Multicultural Skills**

Provide assessment, counseling, and consultation services in work with clients by applying psychological and multicultural theories and research to diverse populations, and modifying interventions as needed to work effectively with diverse clients.

**Competency 2: Multicultural Awareness**

Examine personal values and biases, reflect on beliefs, and understand how they impact work with clients and interpersonal relationships with other students and faculty.

**Competency 3: Multicultural Knowledge**

Identify and assess the complexity and multidimensionality of cultural/diversity theories and issues in the field of counseling psychology while working with clients and interpersonal relationships with other students and faculty.

**Course Objectives:**

- 1) Students will demonstrate the ability to identify ways in which children and adults are involved with intimate violence and to recognize more and less overt effects of this.
- 2) Students will gain an awareness of the social and political factors/structures that enable child maltreatment and intimate partner violence to continue unabated.
- 3) Students will gain awareness of and confront issues within themselves that might hamper their ability to be effective in working with perpetrators or survivors of abuse.
- 4) Students will understand their responsibility as mandated reporters of child maltreatment and elder and dependent adult abuse, and will be exposed to local community resources and legal systems which address family violence.
- 5) Students will have an introductory knowledge of several models of treatment and intervention for those involved in intimate violence.
- 6) Students will demonstrate understanding of the various court systems with which individuals, couples and families experiencing intimate violence may become involved.
- 7) Students will participate in thoughtful and informed discussions regarding the potential roles of a clinician with respect to issues of intimate violence.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Prior to the First Weekend:**

1) Prior to the first weekend, read and be prepared to discuss Lough, P. (2003). *The California child abuse & neglect reporting law: Issues and answers for mandated reporters*. California Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention. Students are responsible for downloading this document from the California Department of Social Services web site.

2) Additionally; read Chapters 1 through 7 in required text Barnett, O.W., Miller-Perrin, C.L., & Perrin, R.D. (2004). *Family violence across the lifespan: An introduction*. Second Edition.

**Prior to the Second Weekend:** Read the remaining chapters in the Barnett, Miller-Perrin & Perrin text and be prepared to discuss them during the second weekend of class. Read the Lieberman and Van Horn text and be prepared to discuss it in class. Finally, be prepared to present independent research project as described below.

**Online Schedule of Assignments – NOTE:** Online assignments are subject to change at the instructor's discretion and without prior notice. Online assignments will be posted on Mondays and your responses to the topic must be posted by midnight Saturday of the same week.

**Week 1-Due Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>**

No written assignment. Start preparing for our first weekend by reading chapters 1-7 in the Barnett, Miller-Perrin & Perrin text, as well as *California Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Law* as described above.

**Week 2- Due Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>**

- 1) Submit to Drop Box the following, under the assignment title “Introductory Statements:”
  - A) Your name, phone number and email address.
  - B) Briefly (about one paragraph) describe professional experience or training you may have had around intimate violence – child maltreatment, domestic violence, dependent adult, spousal or elder abuse, etc.
  - C) IF YOU WISH, you may also inform me of personal experiences in this area – your own or friends or family members’ exposure to/involvement with intimate violence.
  - D) Finally, let me know about any particular questions you have regarding intimate violence and material you hope will be covered in this course.
- 2) Consider topics of interest for your research project (see list below) and prepared to get the topic approved by instructor in class next weekend.
- 3) Continue preparing for our first weekend by reading chapters 1-7 in the Barnett, Miller-Perrin & Perrin text, as well as *California Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Law* as described above.

**Week 3- Due Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>**

See you in class!

**Week 4- Due Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>**

Read chapters 8, 9 & 10 and respond to online assignment as directed.

**Week 5- Due Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>**

Read chapters 11, 12 & 13 and respond to online assignment as directed.

**Week 6- Due Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>**

Read Lieberman, A.F. & Van Horn, P. (2005). *Don't hit my mommy! A manual for child-parent psychotherapy with young witnesses of family violence*. Respond to online assignment as directed.

**Week 7- Due Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>**

Complete research paper (guidelines below). Submit to instructor an electronic version of paper by Drop Box under the assignment title “Research Paper” and a hard copy in class, plus copies of the 2 extra sources you used, with full citation information. Be prepared to present in class.

See you in class!

**Student Performance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures:**

**Expectations Regarding Writing**

As this is a graduate level course, it is expected that papers will reflect graduate level writing skills. Grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice are all taken into consideration in assigning grades and it is expected that papers conform to conventions of scholarly writing. APA formatting is required. While some guidelines will be presented during the initial weekend, it is incumbent upon students to secure any needed writing support for themselves. Resources include writing tutors, the Argosy professional writing course, and the Purdue University Department of English writing resources web site – <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

**Guidelines for ALL assignments:**

- ~ All written assignments are due on the dates and times stated in the syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted.
- ~ Weekly online writing assignments are less formal than the research paper, but should still reflect high standards of scholarship, clarity of expression, professionalism, and personal psychological-mindedness.
- ~ Research papers must be in APA format and all works cited must be appropriately referenced.
- ~ Papers may be submitted to Turnitin.com to check for originality.
- ~ Research papers should be double spaced and 10-12 point font.
- ~ Research papers must be submitted electronically via Drop Box in Microsoft Word '97-2003 (.doc) as well as by hard copy in class.

**Class participation (25 %)**

Attendance and participation at weekend sessions are mandatory. Missing ANY PART of weekend sessions could result in loss of credit for the course, including arriving late in the morning or following breaks.

As with any graduate course in counseling psychology, it is expected that students comport themselves in a thoughtful, professional, and respectful manner. Because issues around intimate violence tend to be especially sensitive and sometimes shame-ridden, particular sensitivity regarding both internal personal experience and interpersonal/group issues is necessary in this course. The higher the comfort level of the group regarding self-disclosure and frank exchange, the higher will be the quality of the discussions. At the same time, it is important that each person monitor the impact of his or her own statements and behavior on the group and take responsibility for avoiding situations in which group members become psychologically overwhelmed or shut down. Each individual is responsible for deciding what he or she is comfortable disclosing, and the goal should always be to further group learning. Any struggles, questions or concerns around these issues may be discussed with the instructor during office hours.

**Online writing assignments (15 %)**

See schedule of assignments above.

**Research paper (25 %) & presentation (10 %)**

**Topic:** Choose an intimate violence-related topic of interest to you. Address a mental health-related issue (such as symptom presentation, treatment approaches, relational implications, transference/counter-transference dilemmas, etc.) rather than taking a purely historical, sociological, or macro-political approach. Conduct independent research and write an APA style scholarly paper discussing your findings. Topics must be chosen and cleared with instructor prior to end of the first Sunday of class. Do not start this assignment without prior approval of instructor. We will take time out to choose topics as a group in class.

**Length:** Papers are to be five pages long (not including references) in a reasonable font (10-12 point). Part of the challenge of this assignment is to keep to this page limit while still meeting the other requirements.

**Sources:** Each paper must incorporate information from your text book and at least two new journal articles from a peer reviewed journal or chapters from a relevant scholarly work. Use paraphrasing, summarizing and quotation, with appropriate APA style citation and full references. Academic and professional clinical sources are acceptable. Magazines, self-help books etc. are not acceptable. DO NOT rely on information gleaned from an internet search of your topic.

Search in Psych Info or PILOTS databases. You will submit copies of the 2 supplemental articles/chapters along with your paper. If in doubt regarding the suitability of a source, consult with the instructor. You will probably need to read several articles and/or chapters on your topic in order to choose the ones that will best work for your paper.

**Thesis and Argument:** The paper should advance some original idea or synthesis of your own, incorporating and building on or critiquing rather than merely summarizing what others have written. Avoid a “laundry list” approach to organizing your paper (e.g. “this is true and this is true and this is true and this is true”) and instead construct and develop an argument of your own (e.g. “So-and-so has claimed X, but this doesn’t take into consideration Y...This paper examines the findings of a study that found [blank] and suggests that [your idea here]”). A strong paper uses paraphrasing, summarizing and quotation in ways that both do justice to the work of others and further the original contribution of the author.

**Presentation:** Your research and thinking will be shared with other students in the class via an in-class oral presentation. The presentation can include Power Point, although this is NOT a requirement. The length of the presentation will be determined by the instructor based on the number of students in the class, and keeping to the allotted time frame is part of the assignment. The presentation will be supplemented by a required one-page handout for the class. This could be an outline of your talk, a list of key points, a list of related resources, a relevant vignette, or whatever you think would be helpful in conveying the information. Bring a copy for each student, and attach a copy to your paper.

**Possible general topics include:** Child victims of sexual abuse; Adult victims of childhood abuse (any type); Child victims of physical abuse; Adult domestic violence victims; Perpetrators of domestic violence; IPV or child abuse in any particular cultural group; Intimate violence in LGBTQ relationships/families; Child victims of neglect; Pedophiles; Parents who sexually abuse children; Victims of elder abuse; Intimate violence in military families. **A specific question should be posed or issue explored within these general topics.** For example, you might research date rape, and then focus your paper specifically on possible ways of understanding (from a psychological perspective) the higher incidence of sexually assaultive behavior among fraternity members. Or you might research elder abuse, and look at the differences between elders in institutional care and elders in the care of family members, making sure to focus on psychological/relational issues.

**Final exam (25%)**

A final exam will be administered on the last day of class. It will consist of multiple choice and brief essay questions covering material addressed in assigned readings, online assignments, and material presented in lecture and in-class handouts during the first weekend.

**Criteria for Class Presentation**

Points	
9-10	Presentation is well organized, keeps within the assigned time frame, and provides excellent coverage of the topic area; informative visual aids provided to the instructor and classmates; presentation substantially furthers group learning
6-8	Presentation is well organized, keeps within the assigned time frame and provides good coverage of the topic area; presentation contributes positively to group learning
5	Coverage of material is adequate; presentation is somewhat disorganized

4 or less	Presentation is disorganized or does not keep within the assigned time frame or does not provide adequate coverage of the topic area, or presentation is missing an important element; or presentation undermined group learning
-----------	--

**Additional Criteria for Paper**

Points	
23-25	Paper is in appropriate APA format, is well thought-out and well written and provides excellent coverage of material, drawing on appropriate sources, integrating research and making an original contribution
19-22	Paper is basically strong, well thought-out and clearly written, but is missing one component of APA format OR coverage of material is adequate
10-18	Limited coverage of material OR inappropriate sources OR some degree of difficulty with writing or APA format
<10	Paper is disorganized AND coverage is not adequate AND does not conform to APA format, or there is evidence of plagiarism, or paper not submitted

**Class Participation Evaluation Criteria (25 points)**

Criteria	Distinguished Category 23-25 points	Commendable Category 19-22 points	Average Category 15-18 points	Failed Category <15 points
Personal goals	Pursues goals with appropriate high energy and assertion.	Pursues goals actively and with some assertion.	Pursues goals with low energy and mostly with prompting from others.	Fails to set goals.
Member goals	Works toward shared goals in a highly cooperative manner.	Works toward shared goals in a cooperative manner; at times with compliance and defiance.	Works toward shared goals mostly with compliance or defiance.	Not cooperative in working toward shared goals
Creating climate of trust and openness	Uses active listening and responding skills which are highly facilitative.	Uses active listening and responding skills which are facilitative.	Uses active listening and responding skills which are minimally facilitative.	Uses active listening and responding skills which are destructively facilitative
Displaying sensitivity	Displays consistent sensitivity to similarities and differences with	Displays sensitivity to similarities and differences with individuals from	Displays some degree of sensitivity to similarities and differences with	Lacks sensitivity to similarities and differences with individuals from varied

	individuals from varied backgrounds.	varied backgrounds.	individuals from varied backgrounds.	backgrounds.
--	--------------------------------------	---------------------	--------------------------------------	--------------

**Note:** Member goals include timely submission of email assignments and online posting as well as being to class on time, returning from breaks on time, and generally supporting the learning environment.

**Grading**

**Online assignments 15%**

**Research paper and presentation 35%**

**Final Exam 25%**

**Class Participation 25%**

93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
69 below	F

**Library**

*All resources in Argosy University’s online collection are available through the Internet. The campus librarian will provide students with links, user IDs, and passwords.*

**Library Resources:** Argosy University’s core online collection features nearly 21,000 full-text journals and 23,000 electronic books and other content covering all academic subject areas including Business & Economics, Career & General Education, Computers, Engineering & Applied Science, Humanities, Science, Medicine & Allied Health, and Social & Behavior Sciences. Many titles are directly accessible through the Online Public Access Catalog at <http://library.argosyu.edu>. Detailed descriptions of online resources are located at <http://library.argosyu.edu/misc/onlinedblist.html>.

In addition to online resources, Argosy University’s onsite collections contain a wealth of subject-specific research materials searchable in the Online Public Access Catalog. Catalog searching is easily limited to individual campus collections. Alternatively, students can search combined collections of all Argosy University Libraries. Students are encouraged to seek research and reference assistance from campus librarians.

**Information Literacy:** Argosy University’s Information Literacy Tutorial was developed to teach students fundamental and transferable research skills. The tutorial consists of five modules where students learn to select sources appropriate for academic-level research, search periodical indexes and search engines, and evaluate and cite information. In the tutorial, students study concepts and practice them through interactions. At the conclusion of each module, they can test their

comprehension and receive immediate feedback. Each module takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Please view the tutorial at <http://library.argosyu.edu/infolit/>

### **Academic Policies**

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2001)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Scholarly writing: The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing, free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You may be asked to submit your course assignments through "Turnitin," ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language. See additional information about expectations regarding writing above.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act Policy**

It is the policy of Argosy University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a student with disabilities needs accommodations, the student must notify the Director of Student Services. Procedures for documenting student disability and the development of reasonable accommodations will be provided to the student upon request.

Students will be notified by the Director of Student Services when each request for accommodation is approved or denied in writing via a designated form. To receive accommodation in class, it is the student's responsibility to present the form (at his or her discretion) to the instructor. In an effort to protect student privacy, the Department of Student Services will not discuss the accommodation needs of any student with instructors. Faculty may not make accommodations for individuals who have not been approved in this manner.

### **The Argosy University Statement Regarding Diversity**

Argosy University prepares students to serve populations with diverse social, ethnic, economic, and educational experiences. Both the academic and training curricula are designed to provide an environment in which students can develop the skills and attitudes essential to working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.

**Course Design**

Past instructors including Amy P. Brom, MSW, PsyD and Christine Mayerchak, PsyD contributed to elements of course design.