

**Argosy University**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**Couples and Family Therapy in Spanish**  
**PC 6700**

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**Faculty Information**

**Faculty Name:** Erica Torres, Psy.D.

**Campus:** San Francisco Bay Area

**Contact Information:** dr.torres@me.com

**Office Hours:** Available by appointment

*All communication from your instructors and the department will be sent to your Argosy email address. You are responsible for checking your Argosy email regularly.*

**Course Description:** This is a bilingual (English/Spanish) course designed to teach the basics in couples and family systems theory and the historical context from which it arose. Students learn the application of systems theory to the treatment of Latina/o families, specifically those who are monolingual Spanish-speaking. A comparison and critique of systems theory from a postmodern perspective is included. The limitations of systems theory to families of diverse backgrounds is considered as well as modifications of the approaches typical of system models to meet the needs of such families.

**Course Pre-requisites:** None

**Required Textbook(s):**

Nichols, M.P. (2008). *The essentials of family therapy, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. ISBN: 0-205-59216-3

Santiago-Rivera, A.L., Arredondo, P., & Gallardo-Cooper, M. (2002). *Counseling Latinos and la familia: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 9780761923305

**Required Journal Articles (to be provided in class):**

Bernal, G. & Flores-Ortiz, Y. (2007). Latino Families in Therapy: Engagement and Evaluation. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 8 (3), 357-365.

Biever, J. L., Castaño, M. T., González, C., Levy-Navarro, R., Sprowls, C., & Verdinelli, S. (2004). Spanish-Language Psychotherapy: Therapists' Experiences and Needs. *Advances in Psychology*.

Castaño, M. T., Biever, J. L., González, C. G., & Anderson, K. B. (2008). Challenges of Providing Mental Health Services in Spanish. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 38, 667-673.

**Recommended (Optional) Textbook:**

Falicov, C. J. (1998). *Latino Families in Therapy: A Guide to Multicultural Practice*. New York, NY: Guilford Press. ISBN: 1572305932

**Technology:** Internet Access; Microsoft WORD; Adobe Acrobat (full version)

**Course length:** 7.5 Weeks  
**Contact Hours:** 45 Hours  
**Credit Value:** 3.0

**Course Objectives:**

In a supportive and challenging environment, the students will learn to:

1. Compare various theoretical approaches to working with couples and the family as a system, including understanding the impact of the ecological and social environments in which families live.
2. Demonstrate understanding of similarities and differences among theories and their theoretical perspectives, value bases, and gender critiques.
3. Integrate and demonstrate application of procedures, techniques, and methods of differing family intervention models, specifically in Spanish.
4. Understand and integrate research information on effectiveness of empirically-based practice for Latino families.
5. Demonstrate skill in applying knowledge concerning multi-level policies and their impact on interventions with couples and families of diverse culture, socioeconomic background, race, sexual orientation, and ability.

**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.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Prior to the first weekend:**

Prior to the first weekend, read and be prepared to discuss Chapters 1 through 7 in *The essentials of family therapy, 4<sup>th</sup> edition* and Chapters 1, and 6-8 in *Counseling Latinos and la familia*. This material will be discussed throughout the first weekend. Complete Family Genogram (Due March 15<sup>th</sup> in class).

**Prior to the Second Weekend:**

Read Chapters 8-16 in *The essentials of family therapy, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*, and chapters 2-5, and 9 in *Counseling Latinos and la familia*. You are also responsible for reading and knowing any materials handed out in class during the first weekend.

**Online Schedule of Assignments:**

**Week 1**-Topic: Introduction to Family Therapy and Working with Latino Families; Principles and overview of Family Therapy; Genogram  
Due **March 7**– Log into Argosy Online. **Email me** your phone number(s). Please respond to the welcome/introductions post for Week I.

**Week 2**- Topic: Learning about assessment; Conducting assessments in Spanish; Family structure

Complete **Family Genogram**. See instructions below. \***Genograms due in class March 15<sup>th</sup>**.

*Class meets 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> ☺*

**Week 3-** Topic: Schools of therapy; Understanding Latino Perspectives

Due **March 21** - Please respond to online assignment and discussion as directed.

**\*Submit Thought Paper via email to professor (See instructions below) by midnight March 21<sup>st</sup>.**

**Week 4-** Topic: Techniques; More schools of therapy; Challenges to Providing Mental Health Services in Spanish

Due **March 28**: Please respond to online assignment and discussion as directed.

**Week 5-** Topic: Learning about Couples; More family therapy: Working with multiple generations-The Use of Spanglish in Therapy

Due **April 4** – Please respond to online assignment and discussion as directed.

**Week 6-** Topic: Couples and Family Therapy continued; Redefining Diversity

Due **April 11** – Please respond to online assignment and discussion as directed.

**Week 7-** Topic: Postmodern and Integrative Models of Family Therapy

*Class meets 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> ☺*

**\*\*Complete Video Session and Reflection Paper (see Instructions below). Submit any questions to the group during this time.**

**Guidelines for ALL assignments:**

~ All written assignments are due on the dates and times stated in the syllabus. **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

~ All papers **MUST** be in APA format and all works cited must be appropriately referenced. All papers should be double spaced and in 12 font.

~ All papers must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word.

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**Assignment #1 (75 points): Genogram and Thought Paper (due March 21<sup>st</sup>)**

The purposes of this assignment are 1) to understand the factors that make each family unique through the study of your own family of origin, and 2) to gain understanding of your own experiences and attitudes that will influence you as a family therapist.

**Part 1(due in class March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009):** Construct a three generation genogram on yourself - four generations if you include your children. Feel free to include family members as you define family. Draw this genogram by hand—don't use the computer or computer programs to create it. Use a zig-zag line to show conflict, a dotted line to show distance and a triple line to show closeness. See attached pdf file of Genogram symbols).

**Genogram due in class Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. We will go over the genograms together and answer your questions about your genogram and your paper.**

**Part 2 (Due March 21<sup>st</sup> by midnight):** You will write a 5-7 page Thought Paper in which you consider your family of origin, its influences, and how it has helped shape the person you are today. One of more the important factors in being an effective counselor is understanding how the influences of your own life affect your role as a counselor. This analysis will correlate with your genogram. Use the following questions as a guide:

1. Discuss your family of origin's history, and define issues such as disengagement/enmeshment, cutoffs, and patterns of alcohol and drug use, marriages, and separations including grandparents. Include issues of culture, ethnicity, religion, occupation, economics, education, group affiliations, transactions between family members (past and present). How was discipline used, what were the family myths and what roles did family members play? Describe family values, family rules and problems, and responses to problems.
2. Consider the following areas and discuss how they played out in your family. Include specific examples of events, issues, and patterns, and how the family reacted to them. How do they affect you now?
  - What are the generational patterns passed down through the years?
  - How is power used and misused throughout the family patterns?
  - What roles were rigid and reinforced; who were the rebels?
  - What traumas, abandonment, rejection and abuse patterns exists in the family?
3. Highlight four issues, positive or negative, arising from your family of origin which may impact your work as a family therapist. For positives, how do you see yourself drawing upon this strength in your work? How could it benefit your clients? For negatives, how do you see yourself adjusting or accommodating for your own patterns so they won't interfere with your ability to work with families or couples? What do you need to learn, do, or change to remove or diminish this particular weakness? Be sure and include both positive and negative aspects of your family background.

### **Assignment #2 (100 points)– Family Therapy Video Assignment and Reflection Paper**

Because of the limited nature of this class, treatment is covered only briefly. In order to expand your knowledge and understanding of treatment of couples and families, you will research a systems theory and conduct a therapy session utilizing the techniques you learned based on your research.

#### **VIDEO ASSIGNMENT:**

You are to choose a couple to volunteer for an initial therapeutic session **in Spanish**. **DO NOT choose a classmate, anyone currently in therapy, anyone with a history of mental illness, your own family members, or persons under the age of 18.** **Preferably these are acquaintances and not someone you know very well.**

Prior to the session you must obtain written consent from the individuals explaining that the video is for training purposes. You will tell them a bit about a therapy session, if they do not know anything. Ask them to choose a benign issue from their life to discuss with you (i.e. job decision, school decision, etc.), before you sit down and begin the taping. The tape needs to be 50 minutes long. Conduct the session as if it were a first couple's therapy hour. The focus, on your part, is to use a specific school of family therapy from

which to conduct your sessions, including techniques explored in your readings and in class.

You will present a **5 to 10** minute segment of your videotape to the class. You can choose a segment that you think demonstrates your skills or one that was particularly difficult. **In either case, I want you to be able to talk in an informed way about what you noticed. Video tapes must be audible and brought to class on Sunday of the second weekend cued to the segment you want to present to the class. MAKE SURE YOUR EQUIPMENT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE MACHINES WE HAVE AVAILABLE IN CLASS!**

### **REFLECTION PAPER:**

The **6-8 page paper** you are to write should be on a specific school of family therapy, which discusses the treatment model and techniques. You must incorporate information from your text book and at least three new journal articles from a peer reviewed journal. DO NOT rely on information gleaned from an internet search of your topic. Search in Psych Info or PILOTS databases. You must also reflect on your session and discuss ways in which you utilized the model to guide your questions and interventions. **Give specific examples of these skills** and talk about your experience of yourself and your client.

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.

### **Grading for video presentation (40 points total)**

**20 points:** Organization of presentation. Understanding of terms used to talk about skills you see yourself using, or not using. Self reflection, discussion of awareness of self. Do you talk in an **informed way** (i.e. do you know the difference between open and closed questions?) about what you noticed? Do you talk about nonverbal communication?

**20 points:** Set up of video tape, preparation. Did you rehearse your presentation? Clarity of speech and presentation of self. Does your video work on our equipment. Are you ready to go? Are you comfortable with your material or are you simply reading your paper? (points off for reading). **Please note that you will not be graded on your Spanish grammar.**

### **Grading for paper based on video experience (60 points total)**

**40 points:** Do you give a clear understanding of the model of family therapy that you chose? Do you give specific examples of the techniques you see yourself using, or not using? Do you use material from course readings and include references? Do you talk about yourself and your experience in an honest, aware manner? Do you meet the length requirement?

**10 points:** Organization of paper. Is it well thought out? Are your thoughts presented clearly and coherently?

**10 points:** Grammar, style, spelling punctuation etc. Is yours a well written, graduate level paper?

**Class Participation and Lateness: Class attendance at all sessions is mandatory.** I certainly understand there are emergencies in life, but this is an experiential course that is not easily made up. Please let me know if you will be late as I take 2 points off your class participation grade for every 15 minute increment of lateness. See the chart below for specific in class grading criteria for participation. **Late papers and/or assignments will not be accepted. I take class participation very seriously. Let me know if you think this will be a problem for you!**

### Grading Criteria

A = 90+ Student actively participated in discussions in >80% of class sessions; nearly all comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings  
B = 80 89 Student actively participated in discussions in >80% of class sessions; most of the comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings  
C = 70 79 Student participated in discussions in >70% of class sessions; comments/questions demonstrate a surface level understanding of course topics  
F = <70 Student participated in <70% of class sessions; comments/questions did not demonstrate an understanding of course topics, or student did not participate in class discussions.

*Grading Scale*  
*Grading requirements*

<b>A</b>	100 – 93
<b>A-</b>	92 – 90
<b>B+</b>	89 – 88
<b>B</b>	87 – 83
<b>B-</b>	82 – 80
<b>C+</b>	79 – 78
<b>C</b>	77 - 73
<b>C-</b>	72 – 70
<b>F</b>	69 and below

<i>Attendance/participation</i>	20%
<i>Weekly Assignments</i>	20%
<i>Genogram</i>	10%
<i>Thought Paper</i>	15%
<i>Video Presentation</i>	15%
<i>Reflection Paper</i>	20%
	100%

### 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.argosy.edu>. Detailed descriptions of online resources are located at <http://library.argosy.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.argosy.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.

