

Syllabus for  
**PRM 676—Marriage Counseling**  
3 Credit Hours  
Summer 2008

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to cognitive-behavioral approaches to marriage counseling.  
Prerequisites: None.

II. COURSE GOALS

The purpose of this course is to enable the student to do the following:

- A. Acquire general and theological information regarding marriage and family living, divorce and remarriage, and human sexuality.
- B. Develop basic interviewing skills, including the use of a marital assessment.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE

As a result of successfully completing this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- A. List and discuss the stages of married life.
- B. Develop and discuss a theology of marriage.
- C. Explain the importance of developing diagnostic and counseling skills for marriage counseling.
- D. Discuss biblical and psychological concepts of divorce.
- E. Illustrate, either orally or in writing, human sexuality and its impact on marital interaction.

IV. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

A. Required Materials

1. Textbooks

Gottman, J. M. *The Marriage Clinic: A Scientifically Based Marital Therapy*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1999.

Stanley, S., D. Trathen, S. McCain, and M. Bryan. *A Lasting Promise: A Christian Guide to Fighting for Your Marriage*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.

Worthington, E. L. *Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling: A Guide to Brief Therapy*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005.

2. Other  
None

B. Optional Materials

1. Textbooks  
None
2. Other  
None

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. University Policies and Procedures

1. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Oral Roberts University. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.
2. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence are charged a late exam fee.
3. Students and faculty at Oral Roberts University must adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, video, multimedia, or computer software. By submitting an assignment in any form, the student gives permission for the assignment to be checked for plagiarism, either by submitting the work for electronic verification or by other means.
4. Final exams cannot be given before their scheduled times. Students need to check the final exam schedule before planning return flights or other events at the end of the semester.
5. Students are to be in compliance with University, school, and departmental policies regarding ePortfolio requirements. Students should consult the ePortfolio handbooks for requirements regarding general education and the students' majors.
  - a. The penalty for not submitting electronically or for incorrectly submitting an ePortfolio artifact is a zero for that assignment.
  - b. By submitting an assignment, the student gives permission for the assignment to be assessed electronically.

B. School of Theology Policies and Procedures

1. **Completion of Assignments**  
Assignments are due on the dates established in the course calendar, which is published in the syllabus. **Any assignments turned in after the scheduled due date are penalized five percent (5%) of the original value per day including weekends, breaks, and holidays.** All work turned in two weeks after the assignment deadline is received but is granted a grade of zero for that assignment. **No work** is accepted after the final date of regular classes.
2. **Incompletes**
  - a. An incomplete is given only after the student establishes with the academic committee by written petition that student's work is incomplete for good cause (i.e., lengthy illness, death in the family). **Incompletes are rarely granted.** Only those absences that are incurred within the time period of the extenuating circumstances prompting an incomplete are excused. The student is still accountable for any other absences and will be penalized for them according to the attendance policy.
  - b. A Petition for Incomplete Grade with all supporting documentation must be submitted for approval one week prior to the end of normal classes. **The submitting of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an incomplete.** The petition must be approved by the

academic committee of the School of Theology and Missions. Students are expected to continue all course work until an incomplete is granted.

3. **Examinations**

- a. Early examinations **are not** allowed. Late examinations without grade penalty are administered only when extenuating circumstances are present (such as a death in the family the week before exams or a sudden and major illness the week of exams that is documented by a physician).
- b. A Petition for Late Examination must be submitted to the academic dean's office. A **\$15 fee**, plus proper documentation, must accompany the petition. The academic committee reviews each petition and grade penalties are assessed. (Late exam fee is not a grade penalty.)
- c. Students taking late exams should expect alternate versions of the original exams.
- d. **Not being present for the final examination automatically results in failure of the course.**

4. **Attendance**

The Official Attendance Policy for the School of Theology and Missions is as follows:

- a. If the class meets three times a week, the missing of **6** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **8** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two letter** grades. Missing **12** class sessions automatically results in a **grade of F**. If a class meets twice a week, the missing of **4** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **6** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two letter** grades. Missing **8** class sessions automatically results in a **grade of F**. If the class meets once a week, then the missing of **3** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **4** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two letter** grades. Missing **5** class sessions automatically results in a **grade of F**.
- b. **The absences allowed prior to a grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses and are not designed for indiscriminate use.**
- c. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official University business and has received approval in advance from the University administration.
- d. Students are expected to be prompt for classes.
- e. Students are expected to remain for the entire class session.
- f. Leaving early without permission constitutes an absence.

C. Course Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluation Procedures

- a. The final grade for this class is determined in the following manner:

One book presentation (50 points each)	50 pts.
Two exams (100 points each)	200 pts.
A theology of marriage position paper	<u>100 pts.</u>
Total	350 pts.

- b. Final grades are given according to the total points received. Total points possible are calculated as follows:  
A=315-350 pts.  
B=280-314 pts.  
C=245-279 pts.  
D=210-244 pts.  
F=Below 244 pts.
- 2. ePortfolio Requirements
  - a. All students entering the seminary are required to enroll in PRF 059 ePortfolio: Journey to a Transformed Life, which provides specific training to develop the skills needed to create an ePortfolio.
  - b. ePortfolio requirements for this course:  
None
- 3. Other Policies and/or Procedures
  - a. Theology of marriage paper guidelines:
    - (1) Students select one controversial issue regarding marriage and writes a theological position paper expressing personal stance on that issue. The paper should reflect a respectful understanding of the different positions on the issue and should offer a clear rationale for the stance taken.
    - (2) The paper should be 4-6 pages in length and cite a minimum of five sources.
    - (3) Some examples of controversial issues include:
      - (a) Divorce and Remarriage
      - (b) Marital/Family Structure
      - (c) Sexuality
      - (d) Will of God in Mate Selection
      - (e) Same-Sex Marriages
      - (f) Interracial Marriages
      - (g) Pregnancy Out of Wedlock
      - (h) Forgiveness and Reconciliation
      - (i) Theological/Biblical Definition of Marriage
      - (j) Marriage to a Nonbeliever
  - b. Book critique presentation:
    - (1) Student selects any self-help book on sexuality and present a 5-10 minute summary and critique of its content to the class. A written critique is not required, but an outline of each presentation should be made available to class members.
    - (2) The purpose of this assignment is threefold:
      - (a) To increase student's awareness of the available material on sexuality
      - (b) To emphasize an important aspect of marriage counseling that is currently not addressed in other regularly offered classes
      - (c) To assist students in becoming more comfortable in discussing this vital area of relationships

## VI. COURSE CALENDAR

<b>Day</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
1	Introduction to Marriage Counseling Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work	Lecture/discussion Gottman Video
2	Myths and Mistakes of Marital Therapy	Gottman, ch. 1
3	Repair and the Core Triad of Balance	Gottman, ch. 2
4	The Sound Marital House	Gottman, ch. 3
5	The Assessment of Marriage The Disasters and Masters of Marriage	Gottman, ch. 4 Gottman, ch. 5
6	Assumptions and Intervention Overview Enhancing the Marital Friendship	Gottman, ch. 6 Gottman, ch. 7
7	Solving What Is Solvable; Living with the Inevitable Life-Dreams and Shared Meanings	Gottman, chs. 8-9 Gottman, ch. 10
8	Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling: Theory	Worthington, chs. 1-4, 16
9	Precounseling and Assessment Interventions Interventions for Drawing on Central Values	Worthington, chs. 5-6 Worthington, ch. 7
10	Interventions for Revisioning a Core Vision Promoting Confession and Forgiveness	Worthington, ch. 8 Worthington, ch. 9
	<b>Take-Home Gottman Exam Due</b>	
11	Interventions for Strengthening Communication Interventions for Aiding in Conflict Resolution	Worthington, ch. 10 Worthington, ch. 11
12	Interventions for Changing Cognition	Worthington, ch. 12
13	Interventions for Stimulating More Closeness	Worthington, ch. 13
14	<b>Theology of Marriage Paper Due</b> Working with the Angry Couple	Video
15	<b>Final Exam</b>	

**Course Inventory for ORU's Student Learning Outcomes**  
**PRM 676—Marriage Counseling**                      **Dr. Bill Buker, Instructor**  
**Summer 2008**

This course contributes to the ORU student learning outcomes as indicated below:

**Significant Contribution** – Addresses the outcome directly and includes targeted assessment.

**Moderate Contribution** – Addresses the outcome directly or indirectly and includes some assessment.

**Minimal Contribution** – Addresses the outcome indirectly and includes little or no assessment.

**No Contribution** – Does not address the outcome.

The Student Learning Glossary at <http://ir.oru.edu/doc/glossary.pdf> defines each outcome and each of the proficiencies/capacities.

Outcomes & Proficiencies/Capacities		Significant Contribution	Moderate Contribution	Minimal Contribution	No Contribution
<b>1</b>	<b>Outcome #1 – Spirit-Filled Living</b>				
1A	<b>Entry-level competency</b> —Possesses Christian character, personal integrity, a sense of calling, and a demonstrated interest in ministry-related endeavors		X		
1B	<b>Mid-level competency</b> —Exemplifies the fruit of the Spirit, spiritual gifts, ongoing spiritual growth, and clarification of a call to ministry		X		
1C	<b>Candidacy-level competency</b> —Demonstrates involvement in charismatic signs and wonders and integration of ethics and personal integrity in the healing ministry in obedience to a defined call to ministry		X		
<b>2</b>	<b>Outcome #2 – Academic Excellence</b>				
2A	<b>Entry-level competency</b> —Demonstrates an aptitude for graduate theological education			X	
2B	<b>Mid-level competency</b> —Practices theological reflection and sound scholarship in acquiring knowledge through learning and research	X			
2C	<b>Candidacy-level competency</b> —Evidences critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making	X			
<b>3</b>	<b>Outcome #3 – Professional Competence</b>				
3A	<b>Entry-level competency</b> —Demonstrates awareness of professional requirements	X			
3B	<b>Mid-level competency</b> —Communicates discipline-specific information effectively in written and spoken discourse as pertaining to ministry calling	X			
3C	<b>Candidacy-level competency</b> —Integrates leadership in ministry and academic excellence with Spirit-led practices of ministry		X		
<b>4</b>	<b>Outcome #4 – Cultural Relevance</b>				
4A	<b>Entry-level competency</b> —Demonstrates knowledge about cultural diversity	X			
4B	<b>Mid-level competency</b> —Pursues participation in diverse social/cultural contexts		X		
4C	<b>Candidacy-level competency</b> —Evidences skill while engaging in healing, ministry, and acts of justice and mercy in diverse contexts	X			