

Syllabus for  
**GCSL 641—Assessment in Marital and Family Therapy**  
3 Credit Hours  
Spring 2014

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the methods and measures of assessment of couples and families. Includes a variety of interview styles and common evaluations.

Prerequisites: None.

II. COURSE GOALS

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

- A. Develop a theory of marital and family assessment.
- B. Learn to use the clinical interview as a means of marital and family assessment.
- C. Learn to utilize three marital and two familial assessment instruments.
- D. Integrate a variety of assessment data into a written report.

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. Verbalize the importance of assessment as a distinct component separate from therapeutic interventions.
- B. Discuss the significance of designing and implementing a relevant initial interview procedure.
- C. Interpret, either orally or in writing, selected marital and family assessment instruments.
- D. Interact with colleagues in the classroom setting as part of the assessment process.
- E. Present professional written reports of assessment results.
- F. Exhibit skill in selecting, administering, scoring, interpreting, and reporting the results from various assessment instruments.

IV. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

A. Required Materials

1. Textbooks

Thomlison, Barbara. *The Family Assessment Handbook: An Introductory Practice Guide to Family Assessment and Intervention*. 3rd ed. Belmont, MA: Brooks/Cole, 2009. ISBN: 9780495601210  
Also available in digital format

Williams, L., T. M. Edwards, J. Patterson, and L. Chamow. *Essential Assessment Skills for Couple and Family Therapists*. NY: Guilford, 2011.  
ISBN: 978-1609180799

2. Other  
None

B. Optional Materials

1. Textbooks

Grotevant, Harold D., and Cindy I. Carlson. *Family Assessment: A Guide to Methods and Measures*. New York: Guilford Press, 1989.

Karpel, Mark A. *Evaluating Couples: A Handbook for Practitioners*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1994. ISBN: 9780393701807

McGoldrick, M., and R. Gerson. *Genograms in Family Assessment*. New York: Norton, 1985.

Nurse, A. Rodney. *Family Assessment*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1999. ISBN: 9780471153979

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, electronic, video, multimedia, or computer software. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating involve both lying and stealing and are violations of ORU's Honor Code: "I will not cheat or plagiarize; I will do my own academic work and will not inappropriately collaborate with other students on assignments." Plagiarism is usually defined as copying someone else's ideas, words, or sentence structure and submitting them as one's own. Other forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to) the following:
  - a. Submitting another's work as one's own or colluding with someone else and submitting that work as though it were his or hers;
  - b. Failing to meet group assignment or project requirements while claiming to have done so;
  - c. Failing to cite sources used in a paper;
  - d. Creating results for experiments, observations, interviews, or projects that were not done;
  - e. Receiving or giving unauthorized help on assignments.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. Penalties for any of the above infractions may result in disciplinary action including failing the assignment or failing the course or expulsion from the University, as determined by department and University guidelines.
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 Whole Person Assessment requirements. Students should consult the WPA 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. Graduate School of Theology and Ministry Policies and Procedures

1. **Completion of Assignments**

- a. 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 Graduate School of Theology and Ministry. 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 administration and faculty of the Graduate School of Theology and Ministry believe that class attendance is crucial in order for students to receive impartation, spiritual formation, and a community experience. Therefore, the Official Attendance Policy for the GSTM is as follows:

- a. Students will receive one letter grade reduction after missing more than two weeks of classes.

- b. Students who miss more than one month of classes will fail the course.
  - c. **The absences allowed prior to a grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses and are not designed for indiscriminate use.**
  - d. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official university business and has received approval in advance from the university administration.
  - e. Students are expected to be prompt for classes.
  - f. Students are expected to remain for the entire class session.
  - g. Leaving early without permission constitutes an absence.
5. The Disability Service Center, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, assures that no qualified individual with a disability will be denied reasonable accommodations based upon the individual's needs. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Disability Service Center and properly register for these services. For more information, call 918.495.7018 or go to [www.studentresources.oru.edu](http://www.studentresources.oru.edu).

C. Course Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluation Procedures

- a. There are a total of 400 points available in this class, allotted as follows:

Genogram	100 points
Marriage Assessment	100 points
Family Assessment	100 points
Assessment Instrument Presentation	50 points
Assessment Approach	<u>50 points</u>
Total	400 points

- b. Final grades will be determined based on the percentage of total points earned.

A=360-400 points

B=320-359 points

C=280-319 points

D=240-279 points

F=below 240 points

2. Whole Person Assessment Requirements

- a. All students entering the seminary are required to enroll in PRFT 059—ePortfolio: Whole Person Assessment, which provides specific training to develop the skills needed to create an ePortfolio.

- b. WPA requirements for this course:

i. All students, regardless of degree program, must submit the Assessment Reports for GCSL 641 to the course professor on ePortfolio, on the same date the assignment is also due in class.

ii. Failure to correctly submit designated artifact assignments on time to the course professor on ePortfolio will result in an Incomplete grade for the course. When a student submits the missing artifact to the professor on ePortfolio, he or she may fill out a Change of Grade Request with all relevant information and submit it to the course professor for approval and final grade change.

3. Other Policies and/or Procedures

- a. Students are expected to read outside reading that is placed on reserve in the ORU library.

- b. Each student is expected to use specific marital and family case data from which to do the following:

- (1) Correctly analyze
  - (2) Submit written reports integrating the various sources of information
- c. Genogram and ecomap assignment:  
Following the instructions provided in class, construct a personal genogram and ecomap. This assignment will be comprised of both visual and written components. The visual component will consist of the genogram and ecomap drawn according to the appropriate symbols. The written component will consist of your interpretation of the genogram and ecomap. One hundred points has been allotted to this assignment with the visual and written components comprising 50 points each.
- d. Presentation of an assessment instrument:  
Select one assessment instrument of your choosing and administer it to the class. Your presentation should include the following information: author(s), purpose, description, norms, scoring instructions, and validity and reliability information. A sign-up sheet will be passed around in class for you to select a date for this presentation. This assignment is worth 50 points.
- e. Assessment reports:  
You will conduct two marital assessments and two family assessments. Each assessment should include a battery of at least three instruments. From these four assessments, you will write two assessment reports. Select one of the assessments from each area (marriage and family), and write up a report according to the following outline. Each assessment is worth 100 points.
- (1) Introduction
    - (a) Description of instruments administered
    - (b) Reliability and validity information
  - (2) Summary of Principle Findings
    - (a) Raw data
    - (b) Emphasize any significant scores
  - (3) Interpretation of Principle Findings
    - (a) Informal diagnosis
    - (b) Formal diagnosis
  - (4) Recommended Treatment Goals
    - (a) Short-term
    - (b) Long-term
  - (5) Recommended Treatment Interventions
- f. Assessment approach:  
In a 4- to 5-page paper, describe your approach to assessment, both with couples and with families. Indicate how you anticipate approaching the assessment process in a systematic manner. What tools have you decided to use with couples and with families and why? How much time do you anticipate allotting to the initial assessment process? This assignment is worth 50 points.

## VI. COURSE CALENDAR

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
1	Introduction to Assessment in MFT	Thomlison, chs. 1-2; Sperry, ch. 1
2	The Family System Writing Assessment Reports	Thomlison, ch. 3 Handout
3	Family Assessment Genograms and Ecomaps	Thomlison, ch. 4; Sperry, ch. 2 Handout
4	Family Interventions	Thomlison, ch. 5; Sperry, ch. 3
5	Measuring and Evaluating Change <b>Genogram and Ecomap Assignment Due</b>	Thomlison, ch. 6; Sperry, ch. 6
6	Circumplex Model	Handout; Sperry, ch. 5
7	Assessing Family Spirituality	Handout
8	Assessing Couples <b>Family Assessment Report Due</b>	Sperry, ch. 4
9	Clinical Interview	Sperry, ch. 7
10	Basic Questionnaires: Locke-Wallace; Weiss-Cerretto	
11	Prepare Enrich Inventory	Handout
12	Assessing Violence in Marriages and Families	Handout; Sperry, ch. 9
13	Review and Role-Play <b>Marriage Assessment Report Due</b>	
14	Review and Role-Play	
15	Review and Role-Play <b>Assessment Approach Paper Due</b>	
16	Final	

**Inventory for Student Learning Outcomes  
Graduate School of Theology and Ministry**

**Master of Arts in Christian Counseling  
GCSL 641—Assessment in Marital and Family Therapy  
Spring 2014**

**Dr. Bill Buker, Instructor**

This course contributes to student learning outcomes for the Master of Arts in Christian Counseling degree 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.

Degree Program Outcomes	Significant Contribution	Moderate Contribution	Minimal Contribution	No Contribution
<b>1</b>	<b>Theology/Philosophy of Counseling</b>			
Formulate a self-reflective theology of counseling that integrates theological, theoretical, and research perspectives.			X	
<b>2</b>	<b>Assessment Techniques</b>			
Exhibit skill in selecting, administering, scoring, interpreting, and reporting the results from various assessment instruments.	X			
<b>3</b>	<b>Clinical/Theoretical Diagnostic Appraisal</b>			
Demonstrate the ability to interpret case specific information by translating it into accurate diagnostic appraisals.		X		
<b>4</b>	<b>Treatment Plans in Response to Diagnosis</b>			
Display the ability to develop relevant treatment plans in response to specific diagnoses and the skill to implement them in the context of a therapeutic relationship.		X		
<b>5</b>	<b>Research Skills and Methodologies</b>			
Demonstrate basic research skills and methodologies through critiquing research findings and evaluating ESTs.			X	
<b>6</b>	<b>Professional Code of Ethics</b>			
Demonstrate awareness of professional codes of ethics and the ability to apply those codes to ethical dilemmas.		X		