Description
This course is an experiential course in family assessment and change techniques. Students assess simulated and actual family situations, plan intervention strategies, and apply family therapy techniques in the laboratory setting.

Course Objectives
At course completion, the student will:
1. Be able to assess family systems.
2. Be able to utilize family assessment to plan interventions.
3. Demonstrate the implementation of these interventions with simulated families.

Evaluation
Students will be evaluated by the following:
1. Final exam, (two take home letters), 40% of final grade.
2. Three brief (2 page) papers reviewing simulated and/or taped therapy sessions evaluating family dynamics with particular attention to family structure and patterns, and the impact of culture and gender on patterns, 40% of final grade.
3. Attendance and successful participation in therapy laboratory, 20% of final grade.

All assignments and exams are to be turned in by due date. Papers will be graded graded +, +, -, - or -. Exams (the two therapeutic letters) will be assigned decimal grades. The three written assignments are preparation for specific class activities and are expected by the listed due date. Late work will be accepted but with a grade reduction of .2 (on a 4.0 scale per day. (In rare cases, the late penalty may be waived with prior approval of the instructor.)

Each student’s attendance is critical. Absences will adversely affect not only your own learning experiences but those of your colleagues because of the experiential nature of this class. Therefore, attendance will count as part of the participation grade and will affect the final class grade.
Prerequisites
The course is intended for graduate students in the helping professions. SWKG 570, Theories of Family Counseling and Therapy or its equivalent is a prerequisite. Students without SWKG 570 must have permission of the instructor(s) to enter SWKG 571. Undergraduates are not admitted to the course.

Required Text and Journal Readings
Due dates are listed in the weekly schedule. All readings are due on the date indicated in the outline.

Text:

Other required journal readings (also available via ProQuest): *


* NOTE: When using ProQuest, search by journal name, then go to the appropriate volume and issue number, then open the full-text version of the article in PDF format (for graphics, use Word format). The readings in the American Journal of Family Therapy are also available in hard copy at JFK (Main Floor) Periodicals Section at RC488.154. Remember, you will be billed for use of ProQuest, unless, you access it through your EWU internet account via “Gateway” on the JFK Library Website from a remote computer or directly from a computer at JFK Library (EWU is licensed for use of ProQuest).
## Course Outline and Weekly Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Asgn. Due</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 6</td>
<td>Warden Ch 1 The Movement to Systems</td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction and Review and Family Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 13</td>
<td>Warden Ch 2 The First Interview</td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Building, Joining, Planning, Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jan. 27</td>
<td>Warden Ch. 4 Assess: Diagnosis &amp; System Models</td>
<td># 1</td>
<td>Focus &amp; Intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Warden Ch. 5 Assess: The Process of Identifying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Patterns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 3</td>
<td>Warden Ch. 6 Change and Resistance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Restructuring &amp; Boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 10</td>
<td>Warden Ch. 7 Change Techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unbalancing &amp; Complementarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feb. 17</td>
<td>Jory &amp; Anderson (1999)</td>
<td># 2</td>
<td>Realities &amp; Constructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feb. 24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Realities &amp; Constructions: Gender and Ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar. 3</td>
<td>Bean, Benjamin &amp; Bedell (2000)</td>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Language &amp; Universal Prescriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar. 10</td>
<td>Havas &amp; Bonnar (1999)</td>
<td>Final Exam Due</td>
<td>Strengths &amp; Family Variations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course References

The references which follow provide some current materials as well as some classics from the family therapy literature. They provide the student with direction for reading based on individual interest and need related to the class.


Department of Health and Human Services (see http://www.healthypeople.gov).
Assignment #1

View the videotape (or family session from class). Show how you would join with this family as a director and script writer of a family drama. (You may use the stage from the attached page to guide/assist you.)

1. Diagram the family as you experience it from the tape or class.

2. Write stage directions including a diagram using yourself in joining the family.

3. Briefly approach joining from the close, median and disengaged positions with the family.

4. Devise two ways to challenge one of the family's symptoms.

Please note: Show how you would do things rather than telling what you would do. You may use stage directions to help you. Keep written work to approximately two pages.
Assignment #2

Observe the family from the videotape or from the simulated family session. Then do the following:

1. Using your creative talents, draw the family as you experienced them with consideration given to family structure (e.g. power-alignments-boundaries).

2. Structure an intervention that will reframe a family symptom.

3. Show two ways you would assist the family to restructure family dynamics.

Remember folks, use your creativity. This family does not need a mundane or boring therapist. You are encouraged to use the right side of your brain.
Assignment #3

This paper is intended to help you focus on challenging the family world view or realities. Use either the final tape or from a simulated family for this paper. (Tell us who you are choosing.)

First order change

Basic vocabulary:
   a. Pick out *two* words from the family that help describe or form a family pattern. (e.g. we, should, have to, nobody, shouldn't, never, always, etc.). Describe how they form this pattern.
   b. Pick out *two* metaphorical words used by the family, using each in at least two different ways.
   c. What first order communication intervention might your consider?

Second order change

Explanatory schemas, family myths, rules, truths: Pick out *two* myths, rules and/or truths. Describe the cues leading to your inference about the schema.

Patterns, functions and circularity of interactions. Describe how you would highlight the family’s interactive pattern.

Structural norms: roles, power hierarchy, boundaries. Pick two and describe the manner in which you would use a structural intervention to encourage change the organizational pattern.
Final Exam

The exam requires that you write two hypothetical letters. Each letter should be able to stand alone and the two should not be attached to each other. Your letter responding to question one and feedback for both letters will be returned to you. Neither letter should exceed five double-spaced typewritten pages.

1. Write a (hypothetical) letter to Mark Worden, Ph.D. describing this course and the role of his book, *Family Therapy Basics*, in your learning. Describe the most important parts of the books for you and explain how they were helpful. (If you did not find ideas or techniques in the book that were helpful to you, say so and explain why.) How might you be using the concepts and techniques (learned from the book) in five years?

2. Choose one of the simulated families experienced in class. (Please identify the class family selected). Write a therapeutic letter to the family you selected describing what you see vis a vis family systems as described in the book. Shred or burn your notes/rough drafts after completing the paper. The letter should help you in the joining process with the family and should challenge their symptoms, structures, and realities. The letter is to be therapy, not a description of how to do therapy.