



**ERSKINE**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

*For Christ and His Church*

**CO 580 Marriage & Family Counseling**  
**Toney C. Parks, DMin**  
**Spring 2011**  
**Tuesday evening, 6:00 P.M to 9:00 P.M.**  
**Due West, SC.**

Office Hours: Please call to schedule appointments.

Office (864) 379-6693; Cell (864) 350-8409; Home (864)-268-2199 before 10 p.m.

E-mail: [parks@erskine.edu](mailto:parks@erskine.edu);

ETS FAX (864) 379-3171; P. O. Box 668, Due West, SC 29639

[McCain Library](#) (toll free) 1-877-876-4348

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

A study focusing on the concerns of the family and its patterns of communication, this course examines counseling approaches of both a preventive and restorative nature. Practice of counseling skills within the classroom setting is also encouraged. *Required for M.A.C.M. students. Three hours.*

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary (ETS) is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church in faithfulness to the Bible, the Reformed tradition, and the standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church while showing respect for denominational diversity. One of the Seminary's goals is to teach ministers to address Christian people at the points of their deepest needs, listening actively, strengthening them through regular pastoral care, and counseling those with special problems. These areas are addressed in this family and marriage course. At the conclusion of the course it is hoped that each student will have made progress in:

- 1.) articulating with understanding the systemic and developmental nature of families and marriages, and some of the major issues confronting each;
- 2.) understanding and using appropriately some of the basic theories of family and marriage counseling;
- 3.) integrating both theory and theology appropriately in one's counseling of families and couples;
- 4.) developing skills necessary for growing competency in conducting family and marriage counseling and referral;
- 5.) understanding oneself as a member of a family and, where applicable, marriage system, and
- 6.) clarifying one's theological understanding of families and marriage in their various forms.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors (CBD, Amazon, B&N, and Books-A-Million) and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The ETS SBA will receive a modest percentage of the profits from students' and professors' purchases through this portal. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

Each student is expected to purchase and to read in full the following:

Fenell, David L. & Barry K. Weinhold. *Counseling Families: An Introduction to Marriage and Family Therapy*. Denver, CO: Love Publications, 2003.

### Suggested for further study:

Boyd-Franklin, Nancy. *Black Families in Therapy: A Multisystems Approach*. New York, NY: Guilford, 1989. ISBN: 0898627354

Chapell, Bryan. *Each for the Other*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998.

McGoldrick, Monica & Randy Gerson. *Genograms in Family Assessment*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1985.

Olsen, David C. *Integrative Family Therapy*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993.

Worthington, Everett L., Jr. *Marriage Counseling: A Christian Approach to Counseling Couples*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 1989. ISBN: 0-8308-1259-8

## EVALUATION

Your presence at, preparation for, and participation in all class sessions is assumed for a passing grade. In addition, the final grade will be calculated as follows:

- 20% - Research one article from a professional journal on Marriage and Family. Read the article and summarize the article's effect on your ministry.
- 20% - Write an assessment of any Biblical marriage or family, identifying the nature of their crisis. Suggest Scripture and possible treatment options.
- 20% - Develop a genogram describing your family and write a historical assessment of your family and the various dynamics that you found to be important.
- 20% - Develop a historical background study on a couple of your choice. After you finish assess the spiritual and emotional state of the couple's relationship.
- 20% - Final Exam (a Case Study assessing your ability to evaluate, apply and recommend spiritual intervention to issues involving Marriage and Family counseling)

## DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

- Marriage and Family Assessment of a Biblical Family or Marriage

As we discuss various families throughout the Bible, select a family other than Adam and Eve and give a spiritual assessment of the significant issues that exist in the family. You are to focus on as much of the family's historical, spiritual and biological data as possible. Determine the key players in the family, and identify the nature of the problem that you are attempting to treat as a pastoral/spiritual counselor. After you have discerned the necessary information needed to access the family, you are to develop a counseling treatment plan using Biblical text, narratives, or passages from Psalms to help introduce change into the family's life. Please make sure you deal with each member's issues. Failing to do so may have a profound impact on the outcome of your counseling session and your grade. Your paper should be 3-5 double spaced pages.

- Interview & Assessment Report

Interview a couple or a family with an eye for gaining insight into the significant issues faced by the couple or family, both resolved and unresolved. Your goals will be to establish rapport through the use of listening skills, to gain experience in exploring the dynamics of a marital/family relationship, and to draw some tentative conclusions about the couple/family in your assessment of the relationships. Length: 4–6 pages.

- Final Exam – Comprehensive Written and Oral Components

Additionally, each student's application of marriage and family counseling knowledge and skills may be evaluated during a role play and case study session.

## SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

\* Readings in Fenell's *Counseling Families* will be assigned and discussed on a week-to-week basis (TBA)

<b>February 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Introduction and discussion of Class Syllabus</b>
February 8 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Part I: Introducing and Understanding Marriage and Family Therapy</i>
February 15 <sup>th</sup>	Counseling Families: An Introduction-the Family as a System
February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	From Individual Counseling to Marriage and Family Therapy: Building Theoretical Bridges; Using Core Counseling Skills in Marriage and Family Therapy
February 26 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Part II: Helping Couples and Families: Bridging Individual and Systems Theories</i>
	Psychodynamic Theories in Family Treatment Psychodynamic Systems Theories
March 8 <sup>th</sup>	Cognitive/Behavioral Theories in Family Treatment Cognitive/Behavioral Systems Theories
	<i>Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning</i>

March 15 <sup>th</sup>	Humanistic, Existential, and Transpersonal Theories in Family Treatment Humanistic, Existential and Transpersonal Systems Theories
March 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>Part III: Special Issues in Marriage and Family Therapy</i> Conflict Resolution in Family Treatment
March 29 <sup>th</sup>	Treating Families with Special Needs
April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Research in Marriage and Family Therapy
April 12 <sup>th</sup>	Your Family History (Genogram assignment)
April 19 <sup>th</sup>	Professional Issues and Ethics
April 26 <sup>th</sup>	Oral Presentation of Biblical Case Studies
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Oral Presentation of Biblical Case Studies
May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Final Exam (Case Study)

### ERSKINE SEMINARY POLICIES

**Drop/Add/ and Course Withdrawal** Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract, and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a “drop/add” form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student’s receiving a grade of “F” for the course, and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

**Office Hours** My normal office hours are printed in this syllabus. However, due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise, my schedule may change. If you need to see me, I strongly recommend that you call or e-mail to schedule an appointment.

**Language about God and Humanity** Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church’s historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing “humanity” rather than “man” or “people” rather than “men”).

**Conduct in Theological Discussions** Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

**Incompletes** The grade of “I” or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of “I” is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An “I” in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become “F.”

**Official Seminary Class Attendance Policy** Class participation is considered an important part of the total educational experience at Erskine Seminary. Students are expected to attend classes on a regular basis and are responsible for the mastery of all materials required in the course. Students are required to attend all class sessions. If students have to be absent for any reason, they are still responsible for all work missed and all work due. A student who misses more than three class sessions for any reason will automatically fail the course. In general, students are allowed up to three hours of unexcused absence without penalty.

**Style and Bibliographical Formatting Requirements** All papers must be typed/processed (12-point type, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented, following the standards in the “Style and Form Standards” (Erskine Seminary). In this course, footnotes and a bibliography are required in each paper. The paper's cover page and bibliography are not counted towards page requirements.

**Plagiarism** Plagiarism is the use in writing of wording or ideas produced by others without crediting the author and/or source from which the material was taken. As the following statement indicates, plagiarism is a serious offense that undermines both the witness and the integrity of the Christian community:

*Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning*

*Plagiarism injures the community by inhibiting the recognition and cultivation of gifts imparted by the Spirit. Clearly unattributed use of the words and/or ideas of others fails to give appreciative recognition of their gifts. But this illegitimate appropriation of the gifts of others also blocks the recognition and cultivation of the actual gifts of the person engaged in plagiarism.*

*Plagiarism creates an atmosphere of falsehood in the community's discernment and cultivation of gifts, both within the Christian community and in God's larger creation. Since freedom comes only by way of truth (Jn. 8:32), such falsehood can only result in captivity, and therefore has no place in the Christian community.*

*On this basis, the Seminary adheres to the following general requirements for the acknowledgement of sources of academic work. These requirements apply to both print and electronic media.*

*1. Quotations. Any sentence or phrase that a student uses from another source must be placed in quotation marks or, in the case of longer quotations, clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a note) by a precise indication of the source.*

*2. Paraphrasing. Any material that is paraphrased or summarized must also be specifically acknowledged in a note or in the text.*

*3. Ideas. Specific ideas that are borrowed should be acknowledged in a note or in the text, even if the idea has been further elaborated by the student.*

*4. Bibliography. All the sources consulted in the preparation of an essay or report should be listed in a bibliography. In addition to plagiarism, the following related practices are also unacceptable compromises of the truth requisite to a free community:*

*1. Multiple submissions. Failure to obtain prior written permission of the relevant instructors to submit work which has been submitted in identical or similar form in fulfillment of any other academic requirement at any institution.*

*2. False citation. The deliberate attribution to, or citation of, a source from which the material in question was not, in fact, obtained.*

*3. Submission of work done by someone else, either with or without that person's knowledge. Neither ignorance of the regulations concerning academic violations nor personal extenuating circumstances are an adequate defense against charges of plagiarism. The Seminary's provisions for "due process" apply in cases of alleged plagiarism.*

[The italicized statement above is used by permission of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, based upon a document adapted by LTSP, with permission, from "Princeton University Rights, Rules and Responsibilities," 1990 Edition. Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.]

For details refer to the Erskine Seminary Handbook under the Honor Code.

*Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning*

**NOTE:** Under no circumstances will the professor accept a paper containing others' work, either downloaded from Internet sites or used from other students' papers. (In other words, the purpose of the assignment is for the student to reflect critically on the topic at hand and to articulate those reflections in writing.) If the student turns in such a paper to the professor, the grade is an automatic "F" or "0". As in scholarly writing, the student may quote from a reference work using proper citations. The student may also reference others' work in the student's own wording but must give proper credit by citing the original source. (See Turabian for instructions on footnotes, parenthetical references, citations, reference lists, and bibliographies.)

If the student is a published author and chooses to cite from his/her copyrighted material, proper citations must be made as well. Not to do so is considered plagiarism.