The University of Oklahoma  
College of Continuing Education  
Advanced Programs – Course Syllabus

Course Title: Marital and Family Assessment

Course Number: HR 5553-101

Course Description: This course will explore various approaches to conceptualizing assessment of families and couples. The course will examine family functioning and assessment using the major models, theories and perspectives of family therapy. The course will apply theories and perspectives to assess families and couples in conjunction with assessment tools such as genograms. Ethical, legal and other professional issues related to family counseling will be covered.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: January 17-19 & 24-26, 2014  
Location: OCCE, Norman, Oklahoma. Classes are held at the Thurman White Forum Building of OCCE, 1704 Asp Avenue.  
Hours: Fri 5:30-9:30 p.m.; Sat 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sun 1:00-5:00 p.m.  
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: December 19, 2013

Site Director:
Cathy Yeaman. Assistant: Kathie Nicoletti. Phone: 405-325-3333; Fax: 405-325-9148; email: apnorman@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Dr. Mekada Graham MSW  
Mailing Address: Graduate School of Social Work  
California State University Dominguez Hills  
1000 E Victoria Street  
Carson, California 90747  
Telephone Number: (310) 243-2521  
E-mail Address: mekadag@yahoo.com  
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the OU Follett Bookstore located at 1185 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahoma.bkstr.com. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Representatives are available by phone at (405) 325-3511 or (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or E-mail at 0831mgr@fheg.follett.com from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). (Text prices are available online.)


2. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at http://learn.ou.edu; enter your OU NetID (4+4) and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.
Note: Follett is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through Follett.

Recommended Readings (Not provided by Follett/Advanced Programs):


Course Objectives:

- Articulate definitions and understanding of assessment of couples and families.
- We will co-create theoretical scaffolding for conducting family assessment as well as implications of such a framework for clinical practice and research with couples and families.
- To gain an understanding of the theoretical bases and some of the principles for some of the models of family therapy.
- Explore the professional issues and ethics related to working with families
- To gain an understanding of one’s own family, as a prerequisite to being able to work with and understand client families, using the tools and theories developed in the class.
- To increase understanding of how ethnic, gender, developmental issues impact family functioning and family therapy work.
- To gain awareness of personal and family of origin issues that could affect the counseling process
- To review current research relating to the nature, well-being and current problems of contemporary families.

Course Outline:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before the first day</td>
<td>Read Chapter one and two</td>
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<td>of class</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 17th</td>
<td>Introduction and overview</td>
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<td>Assignments and Syllabus</td>
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<td>Understanding families</td>
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<td>Healthy and dysfunctional families</td>
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<td>Models of family interventions/therapy</td>
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<td>Read chapters 7 and 15 for next class</td>
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<td>January 18th</td>
<td>The process of family therapy</td>
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<td>Professional practice ethics and conduct</td>
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<td>Exercises and class discussions</td>
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<td>Reports due</td>
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<td>Assessment and models of family therapy</td>
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<td>Read chapters 9 to 14 for next class</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 19th</td>
<td>Assessment and models of family therapy</td>
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<td>Models of family therapy</td>
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<td>Introduction to Genograms – Bowen assessment</td>
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<td>Application and process</td>
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<td>Class discussion, case studies and exercises</td>
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<td>January 24th</td>
<td>Application and process</td>
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<td>Class discussions – exercises/ cases</td>
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<td>Read Chapter 8 for next class</td>
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<td>January 25th</td>
<td>Genograms</td>
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<td>Couples and marriage</td>
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<td>Marital assessment – couples in conflict</td>
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<td>Video and case studies, class discussions</td>
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Teaching/Learning Methods:

There is an expectation of student initiative in pursing intellectual inquiry and individual motivation to learn and active participation in class learning activities. I expect that everyone will participate and interact in class discussion. This course involves a variety of teaching techniques, such as lectures, small class discussions, class discussion based on previous readings (from text book and other designated sources), videos and class exercises, student presentations and short written papers.

Assignments, Grading and Due dates:

**Assignment 1 - Paper due 17th January**

Ethics and professional conduct during one’s career are based on values. What are your three most salient values? Where did you learn them? How did they impact your decision to become a counselor? Find examples of these values on either an implicit or explicit level in the American Code of Ethics (pages 405 – 413 in text). Be specific in citing specific sections of the code. (500 word report due for discussion in class).

**Assignment 2 - Paper due 26th January**

American families are diverse and are represented in a number of ways. From television shows and movies do an annotated bibliography/Summary of how families are depicted. Include at least 4 shows and/or movies. Analyze one family in depth in regard to its health and dysfunctionality, i.e., what interactions in the family over time support your assessment based on the materials in chapters 1 and 2 of the required text. Share your paper (which should be between 4 to 6 pages not including cover page and references) with the class on the 26th.

**Assignment 3 – Genogram - Paper due 26th January**

Part 1:

Purpose: This exercise introduces the student to one strategy for organizing information about the individual and his/her family and applying theories to offer some possible ways of “understanding” family functioning and family influence. Students will also be given the opportunity to gain understanding of their own experiences and attitudes that will influence you as a family therapist. Self-reflection is a personal tool that can be developed throughout a graduate program.

- Create a genogram (on sheets of paper no poster boards) covering 3 generations (this may be your children, you, and your parents; you, your parents, and grandparents; etc.)
- You should note the relationships/interrelationships between people and across generations.
- Note relevant dates: e.g., births, marriage, separations, deaths, and any important external events, like war. This is like a “family timeline of events.”
- Note type of relationships: e.g., strong, weak, conflicted.
- You should note major stories, identifications; secrets/myths

Because this is personal material, you may wish to limit what you share with the class, or, for that matter, with me. Note: You do not have to reveal any information that you choose not to reveal. I consider any information that you disclose to me will be confidential.

Part 2:

After you have completed a family genogram, this section will be in narrative form to explore your family makeup and history. Your paper should be 8-10 pages long. Discuss your family of origin’s history and define issues such as disengagement/enmeshment, cutoffs, marriages and separations. Include issues of culture, ethnicity, religion, occupation, education, and transactions between family members (past and
present). Describe family values, family rules and problems, and responses to problems. 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 down through the years? How is power used and misused throughout the family patterns? What roles were rigid and reinforced; who were the rebels?

Highlight four issues, positive or negative, arising from your family of origin, which may impact on your work as a family therapist. For positives, how do you see yourself drawing upon this strength in your work? How could it benefit clients? For negatives, how do you see yourself adjusting or accommodating for your own patterns so they will not 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.

Further information about assignments will be provided during first day of class.

Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, or F

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class attendance and participation</td>
<td>15 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>20 Points</td>
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<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>25 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>40 Points</td>
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Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

- cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity.

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Copyright

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA
Mekada Graham, PhD, MSW

Education


Current Positions

- Associate Professor Department of Social Work, California State University Dominguez Hills California
- Previous position: Associate Professor, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

- Advanced Theory: Family Counseling
- Advanced Theory: Marital and Family
- Assessment and Counseling
- Advanced Integrative Seminar
- Human Behavior in the Social Environment.

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

- Childhood studies
- Marital Therapy
- Social Work Theory
- Diversity and social welfare.
- Journal of Ethics and Social Welfare
- North American Editorial Adviser
- British Journal of Social Work
- North American Editorial Adviser

Representative Publications and Presentations


Articles in Refereed Journals


**Book Chapters and Essays**

• Graham, M (in press) Diverse Childhoods - Child welfare in the USA