Course Description
This course is designed to explore the Biblical/Theological basics, the research findings, and clinical issues for marriage and family therapy. Students examine the nature, function, and forms of marital covenants, intimacy, and transformations. Participants will consider a variety of approaches for marriage and family counseling, examine their own beliefs and practices in those areas, and reflect on cultural approaches to use in counseling others. Members will share in a variety of personal learning exercises and clinical experience for role-play during class.

Specializations
Pastoral Care and Counselling
Pastoral Studies

Course Objectives
A. To develop a Biblical and Theological Foundation for a perspective on marriage and the family and for marriage enrichment (Knowing)
B. To learn and to evaluate theologically what research says about marriage and the family (Knowing)
C. To experience marriage and family enrichment by clinically exploring personal relationships (Being)
D. To develop attitudes and skills for leading marriage enrichment and family growth seminars in a church context. (Doing)

Course Requirements
A. A three to five page review of Beam/Stinett (Due June 20) 30%

B. A three to five page review of Gilbert, Concepts of Bowen (Due July 7) 30%

C. A five to ten page research project on some aspect of Marriage and Family, Family Process, or Family Ministry (Due July 15) 30% Topic due June 18

D. A personal genogram (1page) for three or four generations reflecting the Gerson, McGoldrick and Petry book. (Due July 22) 10%
Course Textbooks

Suggested Reading
Rowatt, Mary Jo and Wade Rowatt. The Two-Career Marriage. Westminster/John Knox
Stinett, Nick. Fantastic Families: Six Proven Steps to Building a Stronger Family, 1999

Possible Research Topics
The Bible and Marriage
The Bible and Divorce
A Theology of Marriage
A Theology of Remarriage
The Childless Couple
Two-Career Couples
Co-Habitating Couples
Cross Cultural Marriage
Step-families
Grieving Families
Family Worship
Family Life Education Programs
Preparation for Marriage
The Life Cycle and Marriage
Living Single in a Couples World.
Partners in Marriage
Legal Issues and Marriage
Social Media and Family Life
Sex-education and Family Life
Medical Issues and Family Life
Living Wills
Families and Hospice Care
Mental Illness and the Family
Other Issues as negotiated with the Professor
Course Policies

A. Textbook Purchase:
All required textbooks for this class are available from the College’s book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 218, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

B. Academic Honesty:
Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one’s academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations.

C. Gender Inclusive Language:
McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

Late assignments will lose 1% per day (including weekends). No assignments will be accepted after the cut-off day of July 18.
There are no course extensions unless they have been improved by the Registrar’s Office: thomn@mcmaster.ca

Class Schedule

June 16
Introductions, Expectations, Requirements, and Introduction to Family Study
The Bible and the Family: Love, Marriage, Divorce, Sex, Children
Genograms and Family Counselling
Family group meeting: Introducing our Parents
June 17  The Church and the Family (Marriage, Parenting, Children, and Aging)  
Early Church and Contemporary Church;  
Elements of Strong Families: Commitments and Change,  
Communication and Conflict, Faith and Affirmation (Time, Touch, Praise, Gifts, and Service)  
Family Group sharing of Strengths

June 18  Marriage Enrichment and Family Life Education *(Research Topic Due)*  
Pre Marriage Education and Counselling  
Counselling with Parents and Children  
Family Group meeting  
Family group sharing of Research Topics

June 19  Counselling Estranged Couples  
Counselling with Divorcing Persons  
Special Issues: Aging Parents, Step-Families, One-Parent Families, etc.  
Family group Personal Genograms

June 20  You and Your Family *(Beam/Stinett Book Review Due)*  
Final group meeting and growth goals  
Evaluations of this class

**Selected Bibliography**


Flaskas, Carmel and Imelda McCarthy. Hope and Despair in Narrative and Family Therapy, 2007.


Onedera, Jill Duba. (ed) *The Role of Religion in Marriage and Family Counseling*, 2007


Rivett, Mark and Eddy Street. *Family Therapy: 100 Key Points and Techniques*, 2009


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Disclaimer  
This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.
Restoring Foundations for Couples and Families. Strong family structures lead to stronger communities. Are you called to help mend this critical fabric of society? The Master in Arts in Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling, offered online or on-campus, will equip you for a fulfilling career in counseling. Advance as an advocate, community leader and highly trained, compassionate therapist to children, adolescents, and adults seeking tools for mental and emotional health that leads to healthier relationships. Hold a B.A. or B.S. from a regionally accredited college or university. Desirable degrees include those in counseling, psychology or related human behavioral fields. Other degree fields will also be considered. A major in Marriage and Family Therapy/counseling is a popular major and can be found at many different colleges and universities, all of which are listed below. Our 2020 ranking of the best colleges that offer Marriage and Family Therapy/counseling degrees is based on the compilation of our data from reliable government sources, student surveys, college graduate interviews, and editorial review. You can find more information about a Marriage and Family Therapy/counseling degree below along with a look at schools that offer online degrees in Marriage and Family Therapy/counseling. The Best Mar...