**Wayland Mission Statement**

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, and service to God and humankind.

**Contact Information**

**Course**

: CNSL 5315 VC01 – Marriage, Family, and Couples Therapy

**Campus**

: WBUonline

**Term/Session**

**:** Fall 1 2025

**Instructor**

**:** Dr. Stephen Burger

**Office Phone Number**

**:** 501.206-7013 (personal number, text, or phone)

**WBU Email Address**

**:** Stephen.burger@wayland.wbu.edu

**Office Hours, Building, and Location**

**:** No office with online classes. Contact me via WBU email, phone, or Blackboard messages, and I will schedule a chat.

**Class Meeting Time and Location**

**:** Available onBlackboard online 24/7: Log in at least once weekly on the Blackboard site.

**Course Information**

**Catalog Description**

**:** Critical analysis of therapies, emphasizing recent trends and applied techniques.

This course is designed to emphasize Marriage and Family Therapy by providing a broad understanding of the structure and dynamics of the family, including assessment and methods of marital and family intervention and counseling.

**There is no prerequisite for this course**.

**Textbook Information**

**Required Textbook(s) and/or Required Materials**

**:**

Family Therapy: Overview Goldenberg Cengage 9th 2017 9781305092969

Required Supplement

Attachment Theory in Practice Johnson Guilford Press 2019 9781462538249

*The textbook for this course is part of the* ***Wayland’s Automatic eBook*** *program. You will have access to an eBook and interactive learning material on the first day of class through your Blackboard course site. The cost of this Automatic eBook will be billed directly to your student account when you register for the course. You will be notified via email with access instructions and additional information. If you do not wish to participate in the Automatic eBook program, you will have the first 12 days of class to opt-out of the program (additional details will be outlined in your email instructions). For more information on the Automatic eBook program, visit the Wayland Bookstore* [*Automatic eBook FAQ*](https://bookstore.wbu.edu/site_inclusive.asp) *page.*

**Course Outcome Competencies**

**:** Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

* Understand the basic models, theories, and development of marriage, family, and couples therapy
* Describe the lifecycle stages and transitions of individuals, couples, and families within relationship units
* Articulate the various components of a family unit/structure, including ethnic, cultural, religious, socioeconomic, and geographical influences
* Identify different approaches to aging, personalities, mental health, grief, trauma, and relationship dynamics
* Develop practical skills and techniques to assess problematic patterns and issues in relationships and implement appropriate treatment plans
* Understand the characteristics of healthy family functioning
* Understand factors that influence family happiness, satisfaction, and stability
* Evaluate how the family is an agent of socialization and how this impacts parenting issues

**Attendance Requirements**

WBUonline

Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses. Online courses are no different in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a different manner. Student “attendance” in an online course is defined as active participation in the course as described in the course syllabus. Instructors in online courses are responsible for providing students with clear instructions for how they are required to participate in the course. Additionally, instructors are responsible for incorporating specific instructional activities within their course and will, at a minimum, have weekly mechanisms for documenting student participation. These mechanisms may include, but are not limited to, participating in a weekly discussion board, submitting/completing assignments in Blackboard, or communicating with the instructor. Students aware of necessary absences must inform the professor with as much advance notice as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements. Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 2 or more weeks of an 8-week session, may receive an F for that course. Instructors may also file a Report of Unsatisfactory Progress for students with excessive non-participation. Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given session is considered a “no-show” and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus. Additional attendance and participation policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the university’s attendance policy.

**University Policies**

[Link to Statement on Academic Integrity , and reference one of the following in regard to how generative artificial intelligence (GAI) such as ChatGPT may or may not be used in this course:](https://www.wbu.edu/academics/writing-center/Academic%20Integrity%20Statement%20Pol%208.4.1%20Attch%20Oct%2020222.pdf)

1. Generative AI tools usage encouraged and may be actively assigned in coursework.
   1. Us of generative AI tools is actively encouraged and incorporated in to specific assignments for this course.
   2. Use of generative AI tools for assignments in brainstorming, content understanding, or revision to work is perfectly acceptable is cited and referenced properly in any submitted work for the course.
   3. Use of generative AI is encouraged as long as students understand the use of generative AI in the course is to be an assistance tool and not the generator of assignments and submitted work. Ultimately, all submitted work must still reflect student’s own work, understanding, and analysis.
   4. Specific parameters for generative AI usage provided by the instructor.
   5. Any use of generative AI tools outside of the approved instructor parameters will be considered a form of plagiarism and academic dishonest.

**Disability Statement**

**:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Disability Services Coordinator and Academic Coach serves as the coordinator of students with disabilities and must be contacted concerning accommodation requests (office (806) 291-1057. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

Accessibility issues with content in WBUonline courses or in Blackboard should be addressed to the WBU accessibility coordinator, Dr. Rick Hammer, [hammerr@wbu.edu](mailto:hammerr@wbu.edu) or call (806) 292-9150.

**Course Requirements and Grading Criteria**

**Personal Family Problem:** You will be required to write up a case study on an issue or situation that has been problematic in your current or family of origin. Describe the problem in detail, conceptualize the problem using ideas, terms, and theorists from the theories in class, and explain what type of marriage and family therapy would benefit this problem by identifying specific techniques and interventions (Be specific). This assignment must be at least **six pages in length in content (plus a cover page and reference page)**. It will be evaluated on coherence and flow of ideas, and the ability to conceptualize the problem and discuss appropriate therapy for addressing it using the proper terms and concepts from the course materials. I will not share your papers with anyone, so be as honest as you feel comfortable. **In addition to the 6-page article, you must attach your family’s Genogram (pg. 78 example) and Minuchin’s structural mapping (pgs. 270-280 example) of your family.**

**So, the minimum number of pages with cover pages, references, and maps is nine pages.**

**Case Study:** You are to complete another case study of a family you are familiar with (not your own), which you must conceptualize using at least 3 of the theories we have covered in class. In addition, you should discuss specific interventions and techniques that you would use with this family and mention the duration of therapy and prognosis. What would be your role as a therapist? **The case study should be at least three pages in length in content (plus a cover page and reference page). In addition to the 3-page paper, you must attach the family’s Genogram (pg. 78 example) and Minuchin’s structural mapping (pgs. 270-280 example) of the family.**

**So, the minimum number of pages with a cover page, content, references, and maps is seven pages.**

**Readings Assignment:** During this term, you will read *Attachment Theory in Practice* and write up a four-page book report**.** How will these techniques help you in working with families and couples? What did you learn that was helpful? Please include a cover page.

**Video Review Assignment:** You must watch a movie about marriage and write a **2-page reflection** on what you saw (incorporating the terms and concepts from the class material into your write-up). Most movies have marriages of some sort in them. Be creative. Learn to look for why the situation went wrong or right in the relationship, how you might intervene, and what you learn about people.

**Exams:** Two exams will be administered during the term. The exams consist of objective questions as multiple choice. The tests will consist of items from the textbook. The exam will consist of 40 questions worth 4 points each. You will have Sunday through Saturday to complete the exam. These exams are not proctored, and you may use your book.

**Final Exam:** The final will cover the complete book in all concepts, ideas, and theories. The exams consist of objective multiple-choice questions. The tests will consist of items from the textbook. You will have Sunday through Saturday to complete the exam. The exam is not proctored.

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| **Assignments** | **Total Points for Assignment** |
| **Introduce self** | **0** |
| **Personal Family Problem** | **140** |
| **Case Study** | **100** |
| **Readings Assignment Report** | **140** |
| **Video Review Assignment Report** | **100** |
| **Exam One** | **160** |
| **Exam Two** | **160** |
| **Final Exam** | **200** |

90% - 100% 1000 - 900 is an “A”

80% - 89% 899 - 800 is a “B”

70%- 79 % 799 - 700 is a “C”

60% - 69 % 699 - 600 is a “D”

59% - 0% 599 - zero is an “F”

**The University has a standard grade scale:**

A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F= below 60, W = Withdrawal, WP = withdrew passing, WF = withdrew failing, I = incomplete. An incomplete may be given within the last two weeks of a long term, within the last week of an 8-week session, or within the last two days of a microterm to a student who is passing, but has not completed a term paper, examination, or other required work for reasons beyond the student’s control. A grade of “incomplete” is changed if the work required is completed prior to the last day of the next long 16-week term or 8-week session, unless the instructor designates an earlier date for completion.  If the work is not completed by the appropriate date, the I is converted to an F.

**Student Grade Appeals**

**:** Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Vice President of Academic Affairs to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

**Tentative Schedule**

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| **Date Due Week in Term** | **Assignment** |
| 8/16 Week One | Your introduction |
| 8/23 Week Two | Personal Family Problems |
| 8/30 Week Three | Case Study |
| 9/6 Week Four | Exam One |
| 9/13 Week Five | Reading Assignment Report |
| 9/20 Week Six | Video Review Assignment Report |
| 9/27 Week Seven | Exam Two |
| Oct 4 Week Eight | Final Exam |

**Additional Information**

**Classic books on marriage and family therapy:**

Bateson, G. (1991). *Sacred unity: Further steps to an ecology of mind*. NY: Harper Collins.

Boscolo, L., Cecchin, G., Hoffman, L., & Penn, P. (1987). *Milan Systemic Family*

*Therapy—Conversations in Theory and Practice.* NY: Basic Books.

Bowen, M. (1985).  *Family therapy in clinical practice*. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson.

Boszormenyi-Nagy, I. & Krasner, B. (1986*). Between give and take: A clinical guide to contextual therapy*. NY: Brunner/Mazel.

Boszormenyi-Nagy, I. & Spark, G. (1973). Invisible *Loyalties*. NY: Harper and Row.

Burbatti, G. & Formenti, L. (1988). *The Milan approach to family therapy*. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson.

Framo, J. (1992). *Family-of-origin therapy: An intergenerational approach*. NY: Brunner/Mazel.

Green, R. & Framo, J. (eds.) (1981). *Family therapy: Major contributions*. Madison, CONN: International Universities Press.

Haley, J. (Ed) (1971). *Changing families: A family therapy reader*.

Hoffman, L. (1981*). Foundations of family therapy: A conceptual framework for systems change*.

NY: Basic Books.

Madanes, C. (1989). Strategic *Family Therapy*. San Francisco: 1989.

McGoldrick, M., Pearce, J. & Giordano, J. (eds.) (1982). *Ethnicity and family therapy*. NY: Guilford Press

Minuchin, S. (1974). Families *and Family Therapy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Minuchin, S. & Fishman, H. (1981). *Family Therapy Techniques.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard.

Napier, A. & Whitaker, C. (1978). *The Family Crucible*. NY: Harper and Row.

Nichols, W. C. & Everett, C. A. Systemic Family Therapy: An Interactive Approach. N. Y.: Guilford Press, 1986.

Pittman, Frank S. III, (1987). *Turning points: Treating families in transition and crisis.* NY: W.W. Norton.

### Papero, D. V., (1997) Bowen Family Systems Theory. Boston: Allyn & Bacon

### Scharff, D. & Scharff, J. (1987). *Object relations family therapy*. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson.

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| Popular Self-help books and novels on marriage and family therapy |

Chapman, Gary, *The Five Love Languages: How to express heartfelt commitment to your mate.* 1995.

Gottman, John M., *The Relationship Cure*, Crown Publishers, New York, N. Y. 2001.

Gottman, John M., *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, Crown Publishers, New York, N.Y. 1999.

Lerner, H. *The dance of anger: A woman’s guide to changing the patterns of intimate relationships.* William Morrow & Company. 2003.

Minuchin, S., and Nichols, M. P., *Family healing: Tales of hope and renewal from family therapy.* New York: The Free Press. 1993.

O’Hanlon, Bill & Hudson, Pat; *Love is a Verb*, W. W. Norton, New York, N. Y. 1995.

Parrott, Les & Parrott, Leslie*, Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1995.

Schlesinger, L. *The proper care and feeding of husbands*. 2004.

Stegner, W*. Angle of Repose* Penguin Publishing. 1992.

Weiner-Davis, Michele, *Divorce Busting*, Simon & Schuster, New York, N. Y. 1992.

Weiner-Davis, Michele, The *Divorce Remedy*, Simon & Schuster, New York, N.Y. 2001.

Yalom, Irvin, *Love’s Executioner*, Harper Collins, New York, N.Y. 1989.

# Classic Journal Articles

Baucom, D. H., Shoham, V., Mueser, K. T., Daiuto, A. D. & Stickle, T. R. (1998) Empirically supported Couple and family interventions for marital distress and adult mental health problems. *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*, 66(1), 53-88.

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## **MFT Journals**

Journal of Marital & Family Therapy – AAMFT

Journal of Systemic Therapies **–** Guilford Press

Journal of Marriage and the Family – National Council on Family Relations

Family Process – Family Process, Inc.

**Christian Associations**

AACC American Association of Christian Counselors <https://www.aacc.net/>