

	Chaminade University OF HONOLULU	DMFT 8052 Course Syllabus 3140 Waiialae Avenue - Honolulu, HI 96816 www.chaminade.edu
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Course Number: DMFT 8052

Course Title: Assessment and Diagnosis in Couple/Marriage & Family Therapy

Term: Winter 2025

Credits: Hybrid, 3 credits

Instructor Name: Emily Kahumoku-Fessler, PhD., LMFT

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Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

University Course Catalog Description

This course focuses on issues in the clinical assessment of individuals, couples, and families. It will provide students with a broad theoretical base for understanding psychopathology from not only an individual descriptive, symptomologic perspective as presented in the DSM-5, but also from a contextual, systemic perspective including developmental hallmarks, familial patterns, and sociocultural contributors. Assessment will be considered through a multi-method approach that includes: qualitative interview, observational, clinician-rated, or global rating scales, and self-report inventories.

Mission Statement for Doctorate of Marriage and Family Therapy

The program's mission is based on Marianist values and focused on developing strong leaders within the burgeoning field of Marriage and Family Therapy, who value diversity, promote justice and peace, and embody adaptation and change. Drawing on the Marianist Educational Values of formation in faith; quality education; family spirit; service, justice and peace; and adaptation and change, the program promotes continuous self-reflection and personal growth for the clinical student in their development as Clinical Practitioners in their roles as scholars, therapists, supervisors, and leaders.

Marianist Values

1. Educate for formation in faith
2. Provide an integral quality education
3. Educate in family spirit
4. Educate for service, justice and peace
5. Educate for adaptation and change

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon completion of the Doctorate degree in Marriage and Family Therapy, students will be able to:

PLO1: develop a doctoral-level professional identity as marriage and family therapists and a specialized clinical area that is grounded in research and is at an advanced level of intervention and understanding

(Addresses ACA 2 COAMFTE)

PLO2: synthesize contemporary family and couple therapy models and be responsive to the societal, cultural and spiritual contexts of practice

(Addresses ACA 3 COAMFTE)

PLO3: synthesize the ethics and competency in peace, health, and justice approaches to MFT research, supervision, and practice, demonstrating attention to multiple domains of diversity

(Addresses ACA 2&3 COAMFTE)

PLO4: use and evaluate quantitative and qualitative MFT clinical measures to improve clinical process and outcomes

(Addresses ACA 1 COAMFTE)

PLO5: cultivate a coherent and competent program of MFT supervision

(Addresses ACA 4 COAMFTE)

PLO6: utilize systemic leadership, demonstrating sophistication in program building, leadership, and/or consultation

(Addresses ACA 4 COAMFTE)

Competency Area	Program Learning Outcome
Advanced Relational/Systemic Clinical Theory	PLO1: Students will develop a doctoral-level professional identity as marriage and family therapists and a specialized clinical area that is grounded in research and is at an advanced level of intervention and understanding (Addresses ACA 2 COAMFTE)
Advanced Relational/Systemic Applications to Contemporary Challenges	PLO2: Students will synthesize contemporary family and couple therapy models and be responsive to the societal, cultural and spiritual contexts of practice (Addresses ACA 3 COAMFTE)
Diversity, Service, Justice, Wellness, and Peace	PLO3: Students will synthesize the ethics and competency in peace, health, and justice approaches to MFT research, supervision, and practice, demonstrating attention to multiple domains of diversity (Addresses ACA 2&3 COAMFTE)
Introductory Research Methods Quantitative and Qualitative	PLO4: Students will use and evaluate quantitative and qualitative MFT clinical to improve clinical process and outcomes (Addresses ACA 1 COAMFTE)

Couple and Family Therapy Supervision	PLO5: Students will cultivate a coherent and competent program of MFT supervision (Addresses ACA 4 COAMFTE)
Leadership/Consultation in Marriage/Couple and Family Therapy	PLO6: Students will utilize systemic leadership, demonstrating sophistication in program building, leadership, and/or consultation (Addresses ACA 4 COAMFTE)

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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

1. Describe the theory and development of instruments designed to assess the relational functioning of couples and families (PLO1; PLO2)
2. Analyze research evidence and ecological/systemic implications in the process of assessment and diagnoses of families (PLO2; PLO3)
3. Demonstrate skills associated with conducting relational assessment and diagnoses with couples and families (PLO1; PLO2; PLO3)

Learning Materials

Required Readings

Sperry, L. (2019). *Couple and family assessment: Contemporary and cutting-edge strategies* (3rd edition). Routledge.

Recommended readings

Williams, L., Edwards, T., Patterson, J., Chamow, L. (2011). *Essential assessment skills for couple and family therapists*. Guilford.

Russo, J.A., Coker, J. K., King, J.H. (2023). *DSM-5-TR and family systems*. Springer.

Williams, L. (2022) *Assessment in Couple Therapy. Navigating the 7 Cs of relationships*. Routledge.

**Other readings (chapters or articles) will be posted on the course learning site, Canvas.*

Assessment

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)	Assessment & Description	Contribution (%) to Final Grade
<p>CLO 1: Describe the theory and development of instruments designed to assess the relational functioning of couples and families (PLO1; PLO2)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Systemic Assessment Presentation</i></p> <p>As a class we will co-construct the breadth of assessments that we will be covering during weeks 1 and 2. Each student will be independently be assigned a topic and responsible for providing a depth of knowledge via a presentation and discussion, and will present during week 7 or week 9. The presentation will contain three components:</p> <p>1) IN-CLASS 15-minute presentation(15%), An overview of the area of clinical focus you chose and the relevant instrument Psychometric properties, administration, scoring and interpretation. Also discuss pros and cons of using the instrument, at least one peer-reviewed research article. The presentation will be immediately followed by</p> <p>2) an IN-CLASS 10-minute vignette/case conceptualization and discussion (10%) where you will present a client system and then discuss the clinical relevance of your instrument and circumstances under which such instrument would be favored for use in a client system (vs. for an individual)</p> <p>3) and a SUBMITTED TO CANVAS infographic/worksheet/workbook* (10%) canvas. Prepare and infographic, worksheet or workbook (can be in Word, Canva, PowerPoint, etc.) with relevant information on your selected instruments. Include information regarding research and standardization of the measure, measures of reliability and validity, scoring, administration, and a copy of the instrument, scoring materials, etc.</p> <p>*The handout is meant to serve as a resource to your fellow students, so create them with that audience in mind.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">35%</p>

<p>CLO 2: Analyze research evidence and ecological/systemic implications in the process of assessment and diagnoses of families (PLO2; PLO3)</p>	<p><i>Case Conceptualization Paper: Systemic Assessment and Diagnosis</i></p> <p>Prepare an 8-10 page paper using the following sections of the Formal Case Presentation rubric: systemic assessment and systemic diagnoses, conceptualization based on theory. Also include a brief section of relevant demographic information, an introduction to the client system, and presenting concerns. The bulk of the paper should focus on the systemic assessment of the client system. The client system must be relational (i.e. a couple or family) and can be a real client, or a constructed client.</p>	<p>30%</p>
<p>CLO 3: Demonstrate skills associated with conducting relational assessment and diagnoses with couples and families (PLO1; PLO2; PLO3)</p>	<p><i>Real-time Assessments</i></p> <p>You will be responsible for demonstrating your clinical skill in conducting relational assessment in real-time during class (akin to a pop quiz) and also as an assignment during asynchronous class meetings of client systems in our chosen media forms (i.e. conduct an assessment of a family system from a film or television show).</p>	<p>10%</p>
	<p><i>Discussion Boards & Class Attendance/Participation</i></p> <p>Students are required to contribute to all discussion boards in Canvas by the due date. Discussion board grades will be determined by the entirety of the student's contribution over the course of the class. Students are expected to be present for and contribute to all synchronous class meetings.</p>	<p>25%</p>

Points Breakdown

Assignments	Max Points
Systemic Assessment Presentation	15
Systemic Assessment Case Vignette	10
Systemic Assessment Handout	10

Case Conceptualization Paper: Systemic Assessment and Diagnosis	30
Real-time assessment	10
Class Attendance/Participation: Zoom Link: https://chaminade.zoom.us/j/94915394706 meeting id: 949 1539 4706	25
Total	100

Please submit assignments on time. If something comes up, give me notice in writing (email or text).

Grading scale

100-90%	A
89-80%	B
79-70%	C- Fail, retake

Schedule

Week	Topic	Readings & Tasks	Assignments Due
WEEK 1 Synchronous class meeting on 01/10/24 from 6-8am HST	Philosophy of Assessment Differentiating Systemic/Relational Assessment Listing common/popular family and couple assessments	Review syllabus .ppt assessment overview	Log-in to Canvas and ensure you have access to course material
WEEK 2 1/15-1/19	Continuation of discussion of common/popular couple and family assessments Constructing our class topics of interest Systemic Assessment of Individual vs. couples in a relational system	Review: Systemic Assessment Presentation, all three components Review: Systemic Case Conceptualization Assignment (paper) Select two theories that resonate with you from Boss et al (1993) Sperry, chapters 1-3	Online Discussion 1: How is clinical assessment similar/different/unique for MFTs (compared with the other core mental health professions)? Discussion Board Assignment: propose two systemic assessment topics and choose a presentation date.
WEEK 3 Synchronous class meeting on 01/24/24 from 6-8am HST	Systemic Assessment: Families and other relational systems (non dyadic couples)	Real-time assessment Sperry, chapters 4-6	MFT Theory-Based Assessments: Go through the major MFT theories and note which ones resonate with you. Then note how they assess couples and families.

Week	Topic	Readings & Tasks	Assignments Due
WEEK 4 1/29-2/2	Systemic Assessment of the Client System: Families Genograms	Watch _____ Sperry, chapters 7-9	Online Discussion 2: Define a family system from the film and conduct a genogram assessment and upload to discussion board. Also, conceptualize your topic for systemic assessment and how it would apply to this client system
WEEK 5 Synchronous class meeting on 02/07/24 from 6-8am HST	Systemic Assessment: Couples and other romantic partnership configurations Overview of class topics of interest in how they relate to client systems	Williams et al. Ch. 9 & 11	Group participation credit discussion of relational genogram. Mini-presentation of your topic and assessment of the fictional client system
WEEK 6 2/12-2/16	Systemic Diagnoses and Z codes	Williams et al Ch. 10 & 12	Online Discussion 3:
WEEK 7 Synchronous class meeting on 2/21/24 from 6-8am HST	Contextual and Background Information for topics of interest		Systemic Assessment presentation for: Group A 1.) _____ 2.) _____ 3.) _____
WEEK 8 2/26-3/1	Person-of-the-Therapist & Reflexivity	Luthman & Kirschenbaum (1974) Therapist's Use of Self Aponte (1992) Training the Person of the Therapist	Discussion Board 4a: Provide feedback for those that presented, and also provide feedback about how person-of-the-therapist impacted you experience.

Week	Topic	Readings & Tasks	Assignments Due
WEEK 9 3/4-3/8	The Common Factors Approach to MFT	Sprenkle et al (2013) The Common Factors of MFT Davis (2005) Common Factors Model of MFT Apote (2002) The Soul of the MFT	Upload Case Conceptualization Presentation to Canvas
WEEK 10 Synchronous class meeting on 3/13/24 from 6-8am HST	Contextual and Background Information for topics of interest		Systemic Assessment presentation for: Group A 1.) _____ 2.) _____ 3.) _____

Instructor reserves the right to modify the course schedule based on class needs and dynamics of current events.

Writing Standards

All work submitted by Chaminade University students within the DMFT program must meet the following writing standards. Written assignments should:

1. Use correctly the grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure of Standard Written English.
2. Develop ideas, themes, and main points coherently and with clarity.
3. Adopt modes and styles appropriate to their purpose and audience (i.e. academic style, research style, and clinical style).
4. Utilize APA style formatting for all papers unless specified otherwise. APA format includes 12-pt serif font (Times New Roman preferred), one inch margins, double spaces, in-text citation, correct level heading, title page (abstract not always necessary).
5. Carefully analyze and synthesize material and ideas borrowed from sources. In addition, the sources must be correctly cited both in the body of the paper and the Reference page to avoid plagiarism (see Plagiarism).

Assignments

All assignments need to be submitted online on Canvas by the due date (before 11:59pm on the day it is due). No assignments will be accepted late unless you have contacted the instructor 48 hours prior to the due date and have been granted an extension.

Academic Honesty

Violations of the Honor Code are serious. They harm other students, your professor, and the integrity of the University. Alleged violations will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs. If found guilty of plagiarism, a student might receive a range of penalties, including failure of an

assignment, failure of an assignment and withholding of the final course grade until a paper is turned in on the topic of plagiarism, failure of the course, or suspension from the University.

Violations of Academic Integrity: Violations of the principle include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, or other devices in any academic exercise.
- Fabrication and Falsification: Intentional and unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification is a matter of inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- Multiple Submissions: The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work for credit (including oral reports) more than once without authorization.
- Plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source).
- Abuse of Academic Materials: Intentionally or knowingly destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic resource materials.
- Complicity in Academic Dishonesty: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying or borrowing liberally from someone else's work without his/her knowledge or permission; or with his/her knowledge or permission and turning it in as your own work.
- Copying of someone else's exam or paper.
- Allowing someone to turn in your work as his or her own.
- Not providing adequate references for cited work.
- Copying and pasting large quotes or passages without properly citing them.

Title IX Compliance

Chaminade University of Honolulu recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. Sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse will NOT be tolerated at CUH. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, I am interested in promoting a safe and healthy environment, and should I learn of any sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you want to speak to a confidential source you may contact the following:

- Chaminade Counseling Center| 808-735-4845.
- Any priest serving as a sacramental confessor or any ordained religious leader serving in the sacred confidence role.

Disability Access

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services. Students with special needs who meet criteria for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions must provide written documentation of the need for accommodations from the Counseling Center by the end of week three of the class, in order for the instructor to plan accordingly. Failure to provide written documentation will prevent your instructor from making the necessary accommodations. Please refer any questions to the Dean of Students.

Chaminade Counseling Center:

Students may consider counseling when they may need an unbiased perspective on issues they are

facing or when they are unable to manage their own difficulties independently and their day-to-day

functioning is being impacted. For more information regarding the Counseling Center services, please

visit: <https://chaminade.edu/student-life/counseling-center/counseling-services/>

Email: counselingcenter@chaminade.edu

Phone: 808-735-4845.

Kokua Ike: Tutoring & Learning Services

Kokua Ike provides access to free one-on-one tutoring for students, online tutoring via TutorMe, and

manages test administration services. Information regarding the tutoring center can be found at <https://chaminade.edu/student-success/kokua-ike/>

Email: tutoring@chaminade.edu

Phone: 808-739-8305

DMFT Doctoral Courses Student Engagement Credit Hour Policy

The unit of semester credit is defined as university-level credit that is awarded for the completion of coursework. One credit hour reflects the amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in a minimum of 45 hours of engagement, regardless of varying credits, duration, modality, or degree level. This equates to one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester. Terms that have alternative lengths, such as 10 week terms, should have an equivalent amount of faculty instruction and out-of-class student work to meet each credit hour. Direct instructor engagement and out-of-class work result in total student engagement time of 45 hours for one credit. The number of engagement hours may be higher, as needed to meet specific learning outcomes.

Doctoral students are expected to perform work of higher quality and quantity, however typically a minimum of forty-five hours of student engagement for each student credit hour is required, although instructors may require roughly a third more work than this minimum undergraduate credit hour requirement. Therefore, a 3-credit doctoral course would typically require engagement of approximately 135 hours for the average student for whom the course is designed. The minimum 45 hours of engagement per credit hour can be satisfied in fully online, internship, or other specialized courses through several means, including (a) regular online instruction or interaction with the faculty member and fellow students and (b) academic engagement through extensive reading, research, online discussion, online quizzes or exams; instruction, collaborative group work, internships, laboratory work, practica, studio work, and preparation of papers, presentations, or other forms of assessment. This policy is in accordance with federal regulations and regional accrediting agencies.

Number of hours per class activity:

Educational activity	Expected hours of Student Engagement:	Details (if any):
Course attendance/Lecture	10	Synchronous class meetings (4 2-hour classes)
Assigned readings	30	2 required Books, plus articles, chapters and independent reading regarding your chosen topics
Key assessments/ Writing assignments	60	Systemic Assessment Paper,
Online interaction	20	Discussion boards
Out of classroom collaboration	15	Watching media, demonstrating practical application of systemic assessment
Presentation & Preparation	20	Topic presentation, topic vignette, topic handout creation
Total hours:	135	

Technical Assistance for Canvas Users:

- Search for help on specific topics or get tips in [Canvas Students](#)
- [Live chat with Canvas Support for students](#)
- Canvas Support Hotline for students: +1-833-209-6111
- Watch this [video to get you started](#)
- [Online tutorials](#): click on “Students” role to access tutorials
- Contact the Chaminade IT Helpdesk for technical issues: helpdesk@chaminade.edu or call (808) 735-4855

Tutoring and Writing Services

Chaminade is proud to offer free, one-on-one tutoring and writing assistance to all students. Tutoring and writing help is available on campus at Kōkua ‘Ike: Center for Student Learning in a variety of subjects (including, but are not limited to: biology, chemistry, math, nursing, English, etc.) from trained Peer and Professional Tutors. Please check [Kōkua ‘Ike’s website](#) for the latest times, list of drop-in hours, and information on scheduling an appointment. Free online tutoring is also available via TutorMe. Tutor Me can be accessed 24/7 from your Canvas account. Simply click Account – Notifications – TutorMe. For more information, please contact Kōkua ‘Ike at tutoring@chaminade.edu or 808-739-8305.

Writing Standards

All work submitted by Chaminade University students within the DMFT program must meet the following writing standards. Written assignments should:

1. Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure of Standard Written English.
2. Develop ideas, themes, and main points coherently and with clarity.
3. Adopt modes and styles appropriate to their purpose and audience (i.e. academic style, research style, and clinical style).

4. Utilize APA style formatting for all papers unless specified otherwise. APA format includes 12-pt serif font (Times New Roman preferred), one-inch margins, double spaces, in-text citation, correct level heading, title page (abstract not always necessary).
5. Carefully analyze and synthesize material and ideas borrowed from sources. In addition, the sources must be correctly cited both in the body of the paper and the Reference page to avoid plagiarism (see Plagiarism).
6. In addition, for this section:
7. First and second level APA headings **MUST** be used to structure the paper. The final sentence(s) of the introductory paragraph should outline the first-level headings for the paper (sample will be provided).
8. All papers must have introductory and closing paragraphs.
9. Papers must be in a neutral, formal academic voice (third person).
10. No personal opinion is allowed in the literature review. The paper should serve to accurately summarize the academic literature without personal commentary. For the literature review paper, students may cite published critiques and opinion from peer-reviewed articles and professional books.