



School of Education and Behavioral Sciences  
Psychology Department

## **DMFT 8059 Decolonized Lens: Centering Indigenous Healing Practices in MFT**

Online Synchronous; Credits: 3      Section: 01      Term: Spring Term 2025

Zoom link for class: <https://chaminade.zoom.us/j/94469009669>

### **Instructor Information**



**Instructor:** Emily Kahumoku-Fessler, PhD., LMFT; LMFTS

**Email:** [Emily Fessler](mailto:emily.fessler@chaminade.edu) emily.fessler@chaminade.edu

**Phone:** 808-739-7426

**Office Location:** Behavioral Sciences Building Room 114

**Office Hours:** By appointment only

**Communication:** Primary form(s) of communication are your official Chaminade email address. Expected response time is within 24 hours during the work week, often much sooner.

### **School & Department Information**

#### **School of Education and Behavioral Science**

Office Location: Behavioral Sciences 101; for more info see [Academic Schools' website](#).

If you have questions regarding the Department of Psychology, reach out to your Instructor or the School of Education and Behavioral Sciences.

### **Course Description & Materials**

#### **Catalog Course Description**

From Chaminade's [online course catalog](#).

This course will provide a critique of how the field of systemic family therapy has historically been driven by evidenced-based models and Western family therapy concepts, which can marginalize indigenous cultural knowledge and emotional healing. This course will provide a framework for supporting decolonizing practices in family therapy and counseling that reflect

values of human diversity, collaboration and participation, distributive justice, and self-determination.

### Time Allocation

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 is verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in 45 hours of engagement. 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, a 10-week term, or equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Direct instructor engagement and out-of-class work result in a total student engagement time of 45 hours for one credit.

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 following federal regulations and regional accrediting agencies.

### Number of hours per class activity:

Educational activity	Expected hours of Student Engagement:	Details (if any):
Readings	45	Mullan Book, Gladwell book/audio
Key assessments/ Writing assignments	55	
Online interaction	10	
Incorporating Feedback	25	
Total hours:		

### Required Materials

#### Required Text:

Mullan, J. (2023). *Decolonizing therapy: oppression, historical trauma, and politicizing your practice*. New York, NY, W. W. Norton.

#### Suggested Text:

Gladwell, M. (2020). *Talking to strangers*. Penguin Books.

Internet connection, full access, and navigation of the Canvas instructional site for this course.

*Hardware Requirements:*

Canvas is accessible from both PC and Mac computers with a reliable internet connection. You will also need to be able to access audio and video files. Subsequently, you should have access to speakers or headphones that allow you to hear the audio.

*Software Requirements:* You will need to have some ability to listen to audio in an mp3 format, watch videos in mp4 format, stream online videos, and read .pdf files. There are a number of free software online that can be downloaded for free. If you need assistance with locating software please feel free to contact me or Chaminade Help Desk at [helpdesk@chaminade.edu](mailto:helpdesk@chaminade.edu) or (808) 735-4855.

**Canvas** (<https://chaminade.instructure.com>)

This course is hosted on Canvas, our Learning Management System (LMS), where you'll access all course materials, submit assignments, and participate in discussions.

Since this is an asynchronous class, you'll have the flexibility to complete the coursework on your own schedule within set deadlines. Canvas will serve as your central hub for:

- **Course Materials:** Access to lectures, readings, and multimedia resources.
- **Assignments:** Submission portals for homework, papers, and projects.
- **Discussions:** Forums for engaging with classmates and instructors.
- **Grades:** Check your progress and feedback on assignments.

Be sure to log in regularly, check announcements, and stay up to date with the course calendar to manage your time effectively.

If you have any questions about navigating Canvas, don't hesitate to reach out!

## Learning Outcomes

### Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

1. 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)
2. 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)

3. 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)

4. Students will use and evaluate quantitative and qualitative MFT clinical to improve clinical process and outcomes.

(Addresses ACA 1 COAMFTE)

5. Students will cultivate a coherent and competent program of MFT supervision.

(Addresses ACA 4 COAMFTE)

6. Students will utilize systemic leadership, demonstrating sophistication in program building, leadership, and/or consultation.

(Addresses ACA 4 COAMFTE)

### **Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)**

At the completion of the course, MFT Doctoral students will be able to:

1. Analyze how power, privilege, and oppression contribute to the intersectionality that affects mental health, family health, and community health (PLO1; PLO3)
2. Explain the concepts of decolonization of therapeutic practices and trauma care (PLO1; PLO2; PLO3)
3. Describe therapeutic interventions and approaches that align with cultural identities and reduce the impact that oppression has on families and communities (PLO3; PLO6)

### **Marianist Values**

This class represents one component of your education at Chaminade University of Honolulu. An education in the Marianist Tradition is marked by five principles and you should take every opportunity possible to reflect upon the role of these characteristics in your education and development:

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

This course is guided by the Marianist Educational Value of Educate for Adaptation and Change. Father Chaminade said, "new times call for new methods." This could not be truer for the field of Psychology. Psychology seeks to identify and understand why we do what we do and think what we think. This value guides this course through its focus on the development of:

1. Flexible thinking; 2. Being respectful of differences; 3. Critical thinking; and 4. Open-mindedness.

## Native Hawaiian Values

Education is an integral value in both Marianist and Native Hawaiian culture. Both recognize the transformative effect of a well-rounded, value-centered education on society, particularly in seeking justice for the marginalized, the forgotten, and the oppressed, always with an eye toward God (Ke Akua). This is reflected in the 'Olelo No'eau (Hawaiian proverbs) and Marianist core beliefs:

1. Educate for Formation in Faith (Mana) E ola au i ke akua ('Olelo No'eau 364) May I live by God.
2. Provide an Integral, Quality Education (Na'auao) Lawe i ka ma'alea a kū'ono'ono ('Olelo No'eau 1957) Acquire skill and make it deep.
3. Educate in Family Spirit ('Ohana) 'Ike aku, 'ike mai, kōkua aku kōkua mai; pela iho la ka nohana 'ohana ('Olelo No'eau 1200) Recognize others, be recognized, help others, be helped; such is a family relationship.
4. Educate for Service, Justice and Peace (Aloha) Ka lama kū o ka no'eau ('Olelo No'eau 1430) Education is the standing torch of wisdom.
5. Educate for Adaptation and Change (Aina) 'A'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi ('Olelo No'eau 203) All knowledge is not taught in the same school

## Course Activities

### Papers: 50 Total Points

Due:	Title: Points Possible	Details:
Week 3	Deconstructing Dominant Models: A Decolonized Critique of Psychotherapy  20 Points	Instructions: Write a scholarly paper that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Selects one or more mainstream psychotherapeutic models to analyze (e.g., CBT, DBT, ACT, psychodynamic therapy, humanistic/existential approaches, narrative therapy, etc.).</li> <li>2. Deconstructs the selected model(s)</li> <li>3. Integrates Decolonizing Frameworks, and</li> <li>4. Engages Scholarly Research</li> </ol> See more details in Canvas, Week 3 Module.
Week 10	Final Paper 30 Points	Details accessible on 5/24 on Canvas Week 10 Module.

### Discussion Boards: 30 Total Points (7.5 Each)

Discussion Board Posts are due on the the Friday of each week they are assigned. Discussion Boards are assigned for all asynchronous weekly meeting except for week 10. Discussion boards assignment detail can be found on Canvas under the weekly module tabs. Please note: Discussion Board assignments for this class may be linked to an experiential activity. Please read through each of the assignments thoroughly and plan accordingly.

<b>Due:</b>	<b>Title: 7.5 Points Each</b>	<b>Details:</b>
Week 2	Prior Knowledge and Positionality	Define Concepts and create a visual map. Provide a video or audio recording of yourself explaining your positionality map.
Week 4	Indigenous Community Engagement Discussion	As part of our work in decolonizing therapeutic practices, I would like each of you to participate in an activity with an Indigenous group in your area. These activities will vary depending on your geographic location, local Indigenous communities, and access
Week 6	Indigenous of Healing Group Experience Reflection	Share your experience engaging with an Indigenous group and/or healing group in your area. This is a chance to reflect on what you observed, how you participated, and what you learned or felt throughout the experience. You may choose to share in a few different formats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Record a vlog where you speak about your experience</li><li>● Upload pictures or short video clips (where appropriate and respectful)</li><li>● Write a narrative post describing your experience</li></ul>
Week 8	Looking Back, Moving Forward	As we come to the end of our journey in this course, take a moment to reflect on what this experience has meant for you as a person, a therapist, and a systems thinker.

### Presentations: 20 Points

<b>Due:</b>	<b>Title: Points Possible</b>	<b>Details:</b>
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<p>Week 10</p> <p><b>DUE JUNE 10</b></p>	<p>Indigenous Healing and Mental Health Practices: A Comparative Analysis with Current MFT Theories 20 Points</p>	<p>In this presentation, you will explore the healing and mental health practices of an indigenous group of your choice, comparing and contrasting these practices with a current Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) theory. By focusing on indigenous perspectives, you will critically examine how these traditional healing methods offer alternative frameworks to mainstream MFT theories. Your presentation should address the following key points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Selection of Indigenous Group:</li> <li>2. Overview of Indigenous Healing Practices:</li> <li>3. Comparison with MFT Theories:</li> <li>4. Contrast and Critique:</li> <li>5. Implications for Therapy Practice:.</li> <li>6. Ethical Considerations and Cultural Sensitivity</li> <li>7. Conclusion</li> </ol>
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## Course Policies

### Attendance

Each student is expected to show attendance to classes through weekly posting to class discussion boards each week.

Students are expected to attend regularly all courses for which they are registered. Student should notify their instructors when illness or other extenuating circumstances prevent them from attending class and make arrangements to complete missed assignments. Notification may be done by emailing the instructor's Chaminade email address, calling the instructor's campus extension, or by leaving a message with the instructor's division office. It is the instructor's prerogative to modify deadlines of course requirements accordingly. Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade. Unexcused absences equivalent to more than a week of classes may lead to a grade reduction for the course. Any unexcused absence of two consecutive weeks or more may result in being withdrawn from the course by the instructor, although the instructor is not required to withdraw students in that scenario. Repeated absences put students at risk of failing grades.

Students with disabilities who have obtained accommodations from the Chaminade University of Honolulu ADA Coordinator may be considered for an exception when the accommodation does not materially alter the attainment of the learning outcomes. Federal regulations require continued attendance for continuing payment of financial aid. When illness or personal reasons necessitate continued absence, the student should

communicate first with the instructor to review the options. Anyone who stops attending a course without official withdrawal may receive a failing grade or be withdrawn by the instructor at the instructor's discretion.

### **Late Work**

Please contact me BEFORE an assignment is due if you know you will be late submitting it. Late submissions will be accepted only until 7 days after the due date but 10 percent of the total possible points will be deducted for each class day it is late. Grading rubrics will be made available for written/research paper assignments.

- All assignments must be completed within the time frame of this class. No work will be accepted after the last class of the term. Incomplete grades are not automatically issued without prior correspondence and deliberation
- No examinations will be administered after its scheduled dates (please refer to the course calendar below) unless a doctor's note is provided or a special arrangement is made in advance.
- If you have questions regarding your assignments, contact me early in the term. I am here to assist you if you need help. Please be proactive.
- Papers or submissions that do not meet my minimum length requirement will be docked points.
- Written assignments will need to be constructed using APA formatting.
- Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade.

### **Changes to the Syllabus**

While the provisions of this syllabus are as accurate and complete as possible, your instructor reserves the right to change any provision herein at any time. Every effort will be made to keep you advised of such changes, and information about such changes will be available from your instructor.

### **Grades of Incomplete**

Incomplete grades are not automatically issued without prior correspondence with the instructor and deliberation.

### **Final Grades**

Final grades are submitted to [Self-Service](#):

A = 90% and above

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% and below

## Important Information

### Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to a University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, and plagiarism, in addition to more obvious dishonesty.

Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who must make a report with recommendations to the Dean of the Academic Division. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor and the Dean of Academic Division and may include an "F" grade for the work in question, an "F" grade for the course, suspension, or dismissal from the University.

For the most up to date information, please refer to the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) on the Chaminade University Catalog website.

### Title IX and Nondiscrimination Statement

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes the dignity of all people, inclusivity and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator.

### Nondiscrimination Policy & Notice of Nondiscrimination

Chaminade University of Honolulu does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the University's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both and contact information may be found at the [Chaminade University Title IX Office Contact Information and Confidential Resources website](#). On-campus Confidential Resources may also be found here at [CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES](#).

The University's Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures can be located on the University webpage at:

<https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policies-procedures/>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the [Campus Incident Report form](#).

Chaminade University of Honolulu prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. The NOTICE of NONDISCRIMINATION can be found here: [Notice of Nondiscrimination](#).

### **CUH Alert Emergency Notification**

To get the latest emergency communication from Chaminade University, students' cell numbers will be connected to Chaminade's emergency notification text system. When you log in to the Chaminade portal, you will be asked to provide some emergency contact information. If you provide a cellphone number, you will receive a text from our emergency notification system asking you to confirm your number. You must respond to that message to complete your registration and get emergency notifications on your phone.

### **Assessment for Student Work**

With the goal of continuing to improve the quality of educational services offered to students, Chaminade University conducts assessments of student achievement of course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Student work is used anonymously as the basis of these assessments, and the work you do in this course may be used in these assessment efforts.

### **Student with Disabilities Statement**

Chaminade University of Honolulu offers accommodations for all actively enrolled students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act (2008).

Students are responsible for contacting Kokua Ike: Center for Student Learning to schedule an appointment. Verification of their disability will be requested through appropriate documentation and once received it will take up to approximately 2–3 weeks to review them. Appropriate paperwork will be completed by the student before notification will be sent out to their instructors. Accommodation paperwork will not be automatically sent out to instructors each semester, as the student is responsible to notify Kokua Ike via email at [ada@chaminade.edu](mailto:ada@chaminade.edu) each semester if changes or notifications are needed.

## **Kōkua 'Ike: Tutoring & Learning 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 on Account > TutorMe. For more information, please contact Kōkua 'Ike at [tutoring@chaminade.edu](mailto:tutoring@chaminade.edu) or 808-739-8305.

## **Academic Conduct Policy**

From the 2018-2019 Undergraduate Academic Catalog (p. 42):

Any community must have a set of rules and standards of conduct by which it operates. At Chaminade, these standards are outlined so as to reflect both the Catholic, Marianist values of the institution and to honor and respect students as responsible adults. All alleged violations of the community standards are handled through an established student conduct process, outlined in the Student Handbook, and operated within the guidelines set to honor both students' rights and campus values.

Students should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the ideals of the University. This includes knowing and respecting the intent of rules, regulations, and/or policies presented in the Student Handbook, and realizing that students are subject to the University's jurisdiction from the time of their admission until their enrollment has been formally terminated. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more details. A copy of the Student Handbook is available on the Chaminade website.

For further information, please refer to the Student Handbook:

[https://studentaffairs.chaminade.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2018-19-N-EW-STUDENT\\_HANDBOOK.pdf](https://studentaffairs.chaminade.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2018-19-N-EW-STUDENT_HANDBOOK.pdf)

## **Citations and References**

- Please cite a source every time you copy a phrase, quote, or paraphrase someone else's words. If you use someone's words verbatim, you will have to use quotation marks and in parenthesis note the author's last name, year of publication, and the page from which you took the quote.
- Example of how to cite a direct quote:

Past research has indicated that "becoming parents heightens couples' awareness of their identity intersections and they turn towards mutually supporting each other" (Hawkins, 2016, p. 121).

- If you paraphrase or just report on what you've read of someone's publication, use the parentheses but omit the page number.
- Always use the (Author, Year) format. Please refer to APA formatting requirements in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition. The Purdue website can also be helpful:  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- Your last page will be the Reference page, listing your full source/references.

### Class Schedule, Readings, and Assignments

Synchronous Class meetings will be held from 6-8AM HST on alternate Wednesdays, starting April 9th.

Week	Topics	Readings/videos	Assignments Due
1	Synchronous Class Meeting "Older and more ancient and also newer and more current."	Mullan: Intro, Ch. 1 and 2	Class Discussion (live): Indigenous groups of interest
2	Asynchronous Class meeting Anti-Racist Framework	Healing the land and self Johnson & Johnson	<b>Discussion Board 1:</b>
3	Synchronous Class Meeting	Mullan: Ch 3, 4	Discuss: "Woke-ish white woman [therapist] told me I needed more!" /Baby in the water metaphor <b>Paper Due:</b> Critical Analysis of Dominant Psychotherapeutic Models
4	Asynchronous Class Meeting "Are we being good ancestors?"	Centering Indigenous and traditional wisdom in Healing Practices, Link: <a href="#">Healing Traditions: Integrating Indigenous Practices in Modern Health Care – Divergent CRO</a>	<b>Discussion Board 2</b>
5	Synchronous Class Meeting	Mullan: Ch 7, 8	
6	Asynchronous Class Meeting Melding personal and professional when it comes to decolonizing.	Mullan: Ch 5, 6	<b>Discussion Board 3:</b>

7	Synchronous Class Meeting	Read: <a href="#">Reimagining Indigenous mental health care — Harvard Gazette</a>	<b>Presentations</b>
8	Asynchronous Class Meeting Reflection on activity	Mullan: Ch, 9, 10, Conclusion	<b>Discussion Board 4</b>
9	Synchronous Class Meeting	Read: <a href="#">Authentic Equity: Honoring Indigenous Healing Practices   Psychology Today</a>	<b>Presentations</b>
10	Asynchronous Class Meeting		<b>Final Paper Due</b>