



McMaster Divinity College

MS 3XM3 Marriage and Family Therapy

Kelvin F. Mutter, DTh
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Wednesdays, Winter 2022
9:00 am – 10:50 am

1. Course Description

Although this course is primarily about Marriage and Family Therapy, the themes and concepts it explores are relevant for anyone who works with families (e.g., youth workers, pastors, etc.). This course will introduce students to selected theories of marital and family therapy and key intervention methods related to each theoretical orientation. These therapeutic models are examined in terms of their theoretical tenets, views of family functioning and dysfunction, methods of assessment, therapeutic goals, treatment process & techniques, role of the counsellor/therapist and evaluation.

Specializations: Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS), Pastoral Studies (PS), and (CC).

2. Course Format

This course will be delivered using in a modified hybrid format in which the class meets in-person on alternate weeks and for a synchronous online class for the weeks between in-person classes. In-person and online class sessions will include a mix of didactic instruction, discussion, video presentations and case studies as appropriate. Reading material is assigned for all sessions. Students are expected to participate in class discussions and to incorporate the class readings and lectures when discussing case studies.

3. Course Objectives

3.1. *Knowing*

- To understand systemic thinking as it applies to marital and family relations.
- To envision strategies for responding to the challenges of marital and family life.
- To be able to reflect on marital and family life using at least two different perspectives.

3.2. *Being*

- To reflect on one's own experience of marriage and family, how this influences the student, and how it may impact the counselling relationship.

3.3. *Doing*

- To be able to provide a relationship-centred approach to assessment and care that sensitively connects with people and engages them in the healing process.
- To be able to facilitate hope by strengthening relational connections within marital and family systems.
- To be able to support couples and families as they seek reconciliation, learn to resolve conflict, and experience forgiveness.

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- To know when and how to make a referral to a qualified counsellor or therapist.

Professional Competencies

This course is intended to support the development of the following competencies.

- Integrate a theory of human psychological functioning.
- Work within a framework based upon established theories of marital and family therapy.
- Integrate knowledge of comparative theories of marital and family therapy relevant to practice.
- Integrate awareness of self in relation to the student's future role as a counsellor, spiritual care provider, or pastor.
- To ensure the student's safe and effective use of self in the therapeutic role as a counsellor, spiritual care provider, or pastor.
- Conduct an appropriate risk assessment.
- Create and maintain effective therapeutic relationships in the learner's role as a counsellor, spiritual care provider, or pastor.
- Establish and maintain core conditions for therapy, spiritual care provider, or pastor care.
- Structure and facilitate the therapeutic process.
- Refer clients, spiritual care recipients, and congregants to qualified professionals.

4. Course Texts:

Bookstore: Texts may be purchased from the *Hurlburt Family Bookstore* located beside the Chapel entrance, opposite Cullen Hall.

For orders in advance: Free shipping is offered to students.

Address: Read On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd., Etobicoke, Ontario. M9A 3C3.

Bookstore Phone: 416 620 2934

Cell to text orders: 416 668 3434

Email for orders books@readon.ca

4.1. Required Text

Yarhouse, M. A. & Sells, J. N. *Family Therapies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal*, 2nd Edition.
Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2017.

4.2. Required Readings (articles)

Unless otherwise indicated, the following required readings may be found on the "Scholars Portal Journals" database available through the Mills Library.

Bartle-Haring, Suzanne, and Arpita Lal. "Using Bowen Theory to Examine Progress in Couple Therapy." *The Family Journal*, 18 (2010), 106–15.

Bond, Caroline, et al. "Practitioner Review: The Effectiveness of Solution Focused Brief Therapy with Children and Families: A Systematic and Critical Evaluation of the Literature from 1990–2010." *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 54 (2013), 707–23.

Brendel, Kristen Esposito, and Brandy R. Maynard. "Child–Parent Interventions for Childhood Anxiety Disorders: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." *Research on Social Work Practice*, 24(2014), 287–95.

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- Gangamma, Rashmi, et al. "A Study of Contextual Therapy Theory's Relational Ethics in Couples in Therapy." *Family Relations*, 61(2012), 825–35.
- Gottman, John M., et al. "Repair During Marital Conflict in Newlyweds: How Couples Move from Attack–Defend to Collaboration." *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 26 (2015), 85–108.
- Johnson, Susan M., and Valerie E. Whiffen. "Made to Measure: Adapting Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy to Partners' Attachment Styles." *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 6(1999), 366–81.
- MacKay, Linda. "Trauma and Bowen Family Systems Theory: Working with Adults Who were Abused as Children." *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 33 (2012), 232–41.
- Murphy, Lindsay S., et al. "Attending to Social Network Usage in Teen and Family Treatment: A Structural-Developmental Approach." *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 24 (2013), 173–87.
- Mutter, Kelvin F. "Pastoral and Christian Marital Therapies: Complementary and Divergent Traditions." *Christian Psychology*, 7(2013), 51–74. http://christianpsych.org/wp_scp/wp-content/uploads/2007/04/Christian-Psychology-7.2-2013-The-Agency-of-Christ.pdf
- Pilkington, Sasha McAllum. "Deconstructing Denial: Stories of Narrative Therapy with People Who are Dying and Their Families." *Journal of Narrative Family Therapy*, (2017), Release 1, 54–75. http://www.journalnft.com/uploads/9/4/4/5/94454805/jnft_2017_release_1_sasha_mcallum_pilkington.pdf
- Sibley, D. Scott, et al. "Generating New Stories of Commitment in Couple Relationships by Utilizing the Sliding Versus Deciding Framework." *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 26 (2015), 68–73.
- Stavrianopoulos, Katherine, et al. "Emotionally Focused Family Therapy: Facilitating Change within a Family System." *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy*, 13 (2014), 25–43.
- Trepper, Terry S. "Solution-Focused Brief Therapy with Families." *Asia Pacific Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, 3 (2012) 137–48.

5. **Course Instructor:**

Biography: Dr. Kelvin Mutter is an Associate Professor (part-time) at McMaster Divinity College, Dr. Mutter is a Registered Psychotherapist (CRPO); an AAMFT Clinical Fellow and Approved Supervisor; a Certified Psychospiritual Therapist Educator (CASC/ACSS); and, a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist (CAMFT). Dr. Mutter's ministry and counselling experience includes both his current work as an individual, couple and family therapist as well as over twelve years in pastoral leadership. Dr. Mutter is married and has three adult children.

Availability: Dr. Mutter will be available for one-on-one consultation after class and during breaks on the days class is scheduled. Otherwise, students may contact him at mutterk@mcmaster.ca.

6. **Course Schedule:**

Date	Location	Educational Foci / Assignments
Jan 12, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	In-Person at MDC	Orientation to Course Movements in Caring for and Counselling Couples and Families

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Date	Location	Educational Foci / Assignments
Read: Mutter "Pastoral and Christian Marital Therapies"		
First Generation Theories: Focusing on Structure, Function, Communication, and Interactions.		
Reading for next Class: (All) Yarhouse & Sells ch. 3; (CS) Bartle-Haring and Lal "Using Bowen Theory to Examine Progress in Couple Therapy"; MacKay "Trauma and Bowen Family Systems Theory..."		
Jan 19, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	Synchronous on-line session	Bowen Family Systems Therapy
Reading for next Class: (All) Yarhouse & Sells ch. 5; (CS) Murphy "Attending to Social Network Usage in Teen and Family Treatment..."		
Jan 26, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	In-Person at MDC	Structural Family Therapy
Reading for next Class: (All) Yarhouse & Sells ch. 10; (CS) Brendel and Maynard. "Child–Parent Interventions for Childhood Anxiety Disorders..."		
Feb 2, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	Synchronous on-line session	Behavioural Family Therapy
Reading for next Class: (All) Yarhouse & Sells ch. 7; (CS) Gangamma et al. "A Study of Contextual Therapy Theory's Relational Ethics in Couples in Therapy"		
Feb 9, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	In-Person at MDC	Contextual Therapy Due: Literature Review (MTS & MDiv Students)
Second Generation Theories: Extension, Diversification and Integration		
Reading for next Class: (All) Yarhouse & Sells ch. 9; (CS) Trepper "Solution-focused brief therapy with families."		
Feb 16, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	Synchronous on-line session	Solution-Focused Family Therapy
Reading for next Class: (CS) Bond, et al. "Practitioner Review..."		
Feb 23, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	In-Person at MDC	Solution Building Couples Therapy
Mar 2, 2022	READING WEEK	
Reading for next Class: (All) Yarhouse & Sells ch. 11, Pilkington "Deconstructing Denial"; (CS) Sibley et al. "Generating New Stories of Commitment ..."		
Mar 9, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	Synchronous on-line session	Narrative Family Therapy
Third Generation Theories: Refinement and Empirical Verification		
Reading for next Class: (All) Yarhouse & Sells ch. 10; (CS) Gottman et al. "Repair During Marital Conflict in Newlyweds..."		
Mar 16, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	In-Person at MDC	Behavioural Marital Therapy Due: Integration Essay (all students)

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Date	Location	Educational Foci / Assignments
Reading for next Class: (All) Yarhouse & Sells ch. 8; (CS) Johnson and Whiffen “Made to measure...”		
Mar 23, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	Synchronous on-line session	Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy
Reading for next Class: Stavrianopoulos et al. “Emotionally Focused Family Therapy...”		
Mar 30, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	In-Person at MDC	Emotionally Focused Family Therapy Due: Safe and Effective Use of Self (All)
Integration: The Whole is Greater than the Sum of Its Parts		
Reading for next Class: (all) Yarhouse & Sells, chs. 1 & 12		
April 6, 2022 (9:00–10:50 am)	Synchronous on-line session	Integrative Models for Marriage and Family Counselling / Therapy

7. Course Requirements:

Assignments	Due Date	MTS/MDiv Assignments		
		CS	PS	CC
Participation		10	10	10
Literature Review Essay	Feb 9, 2022 (MTS & MDiv)	35	35	35
Integration Paper	Mar 16, 2022	35	35	35
Safe and Effective Use of Self	Mar 30, 2022	20	20	20

7.1. Participation (Knowing, Being, Doing).

Class sessions will include a mixture of lecture, discussion and case reflection. The participation grade will be assessed on the basis of the student’s engagement with class activities as well as the student’s ability to respect others in their interactions, to demonstrate familiarity with the readings and texts, and apply the course material in specific situations.

7.2. Written Assignments

7.2.1. Literature Review Essay (all MTS & MDiv Specializations) Feb 9, 2022

This assignment is intended to meet two goals. First, this assignment is designed to orient the student to the literature on a specific topic of their interest. Second, it is expected that the student will focus on sources of sufficient quality that they are able to draw on the sources used in this assignment when they write the Application Essay. NOTE: students unfamiliar with how to write a literature review are advised to consult the document *Book Reviews, Annotated Bibliographies, And Literature Reviews* that is posted on Avenue to Learn.

Assignment Guidelines:

The expected length of this literature review is 3000 words (12 pages).

The student will research the pastoral and/or Christian counselling literature as well as the secular literature on one of the sub-topics identified within chapters 13 to 20 of the Yarhouse and Sells text.

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The number and type of sources to be included in this literature review is determined by the student's program and specialization. NOTE: for the purposes of this essay, a "recent article" is one that has been published in the last ten years.

- MTS & MDiv students, Counselling and Spiritual Care specialization:
Students will read 3–4 quality monographs (books) on the topic from the counselling literature, one of which should represent one of the counselling traditions described in the Yarhouse and Sells book; and, 8–10 recent academic journal articles from the counselling and/or spiritual care literature, at least two of which should reflect the use of one of the counselling traditions described in the first part of the Yarhouse and Sells text.
- MTS & MDiv students, Pastoral Studies specialization:
Students will read 3–4 quality monographs (books) that represent a pastoral care perspective on one of the sub-topics identified within chapters 13 to 20 of the Yarhouse and Sells text, one of these texts should represent the family ministry literature; 8–10 recent academic journal articles, at least three of which should be academic journal articles drawn from the counselling literature and the remaining articles may be taken from the pastoral care literature.
- MTS & MDiv students, Church and Culture specialization:
Students will read 3–4 quality monographs (books) on a relevant to the subject of marriage and family that sits at the point of intersection between church and culture. Students are encouraged to select texts that represent a range of perspectives—e.g., a cultural perspective, a theology of marriage and family that does not represent the student's religious heritage; 8–10 recent academic journal articles, again representative of different perspectives. **NOTE:** The purpose of this paper is to assess and articulate what is happening in contemporary culture and current thinking within the church.

Grading:

- Knowledge & Interpretation (knowing / discernment) (50 %)
- Contextualization (knowing + doing) (35 %)
- Academic Style (15 %)

7.2.2. Integration Paper (all MTS & MDiv Specializations)

Due: Mar 16, 2022

The intent of this assignment is to provide the student an opportunity **to build on** the Literature Review assignment and the relevant chapter in Yarhouse and Sells. NOTE: Students are to demonstrate critical thinking and develop their own ideas rather than simply recapitulating Yarhouse and Sells' argument or methodology.

Assignment Guidelines:

The student will read the chapter(s) in the Yarhouse and Sells text that is (are) relevant to their paper, and review their notes from the Literature Review assignment.

- MTS & MDiv students in the CS and PS specializations will write a 4000 word (16 pages) "Integration Paper" (inclusive of Bibliography) in which they demonstrate how they will use the information and insights they learned in the Literature Review assignment within a ministry setting or counselling practice. Pastoral studies students are expected to

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demonstrate both a familiarity with the pastoral literature as well as an awareness of the relevant counselling literature. Counselling and Spiritual Care students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the topic as well as how they would employ one of the counselling models described in the text. Students may demonstrate their skills in contextualizing and applying their knowledge through the use of hypothetical case studies, or designing a workshop, or developing guidelines for their 'professional' practice, etc.

- MTS & MDiv students in the CC specialization will write a 4000 word (16 pages) "Integration Paper" (inclusive of Bibliography) in which they reflect on and develop a Christian perspective relevant to one facet marriage and family life. Church and Culture students are expected to demonstrate a nuanced awareness of the topic.

Grading:

- Contextualization (knowing + doing) (40 %)
- Performance (doing; i.e., the interview) (45 %)
- Academic Style (15 %)

7.2.3. Safe and Effective Use of Self (all students) Due: Dec 4, 2019

Safe and Effective Use of Self refers to a professional's learned capacity to understand his or her own subjective context and patterns of interaction as they inform his or her participation in a ministry, counselling or therapeutic relationship. It also speaks to the professional's self-reflective use of his or her personality, insights, perceptions, and judgments in order to optimize interactions with those to who they counsel or minister to (definition adapted from the CRPO website).

Assignment Guidelines:

Students will submit a 1500 word (4 to 5 pages) reflection paper in which the student reflects on how one key insight or lesson about "family" they have learned from this course is shaping their understanding of themselves and their perspective on working with others.

Grading:

- Knowledge & Interpretation (knowing / discernment) (20 %)
- Contextualization (knowing + doing) (20 %)
- Personal / Professional Formation (being) (50 %)
- Academic Style (10 %)

8. Course Administration:

College Style for Submission of Written Work: All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Statement on 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

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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 ~ <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>

Gender Inclusive Language: McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

Submission of Written Work: Hard copies of all assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day indicated. Students unable to submit their paper at the beginning of class are requested to speak with the professor to discuss when they plan to submit their assignment. ***Late submission of assignments will be deducted two grade points for every late day beginning 5 pm the day after the assignment was originally due.***

Length: Students are expected to adhere to the word count. If a paper exceeds the word count, grace will be accorded for the first 10%. However, the grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade for each additional 10% a paper exceeds the stipulated word count.

Cell Phone/Computer Policy: Students are to refrain from texting or conducting cell phone conversations while class is in session. Should you need to maintain contact with family members and/or your church or ministry, please turn off the ringer so as to avoid disturbing others; upon receipt of an urgent call, you may discretely excuse yourself from the classroom. The same policy applies to all computer generated sound schemes or other electronic annunciation systems.

9. Supplemental Bibliography:

The supplemental bibliography for this course includes seminal works from three counselling traditions: Marriage and Family Therapy, Pastoral Care and Counselling, and Christian Counselling. In light of the number of sources referenced in this document, this bibliography will be posted to Avenue to Learn.

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