INTEGRATIVE COUPLE THERAPY II
18:820:636:01

SPRING, 2022
Class begins Monday, January 24, 2022 and ends on Monday, May 9, 2022

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Karen Riggs Skean, Psy.D.
Email: kskean@gsapp.rutgers.edu
Phone: 732-236-6821
Class Location: GSAPP A317

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Integrative Couple Therapy II is designed to be a companion class to Integrative Couple Therapy I, as well as a stand-alone class itself. The two classes together provide the student interested in building solid skills in couple work with a broad range of theoretical models and intervention skills for working with couples as well as grounding in normative couple functioning and relationship enhancement. Some students will have ongoing cases in the Couples Clinic to provide experience in clinical application of the work. Students not taking on a case will be given opportunities for other kinds of clinical application, and class will focus on active learning methods: demonstrations, roleplays, and deliberate practice of key skills, acting as a consulting team to ongoing cases. We will watch video of couple therapists as well as have students share their own work with the class. The sharing of case material allows you to benefit not only from your own experiences in conducting this treatment, or in practicing through roleplay, but from those of your colleagues as well.
As did the first semester, the second semester will include work with Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy while also including some additional models not covered in the first term, especially the work of John Gottman and some newer models which focus on experiential and body-focused methods. We will also have classes on specific topics in couple therapy (as opposed to models). We will include two short-term interventions, Cordova’s Couples Check-Up and Doherty’s Discernment Counseling, the first an early intervention model to enhance relationship health and the second an intervention for couples on the brink of divorce to help their decision-making process.

Course Modality:

This course is delivered in person when possible, and a synchronous online platform when necessary, in accordance with university guidelines. To access the companion Canvas course site, please visit Rutgers Canvas at https://canvas.rutgers.edu/ and log in using your NetID. This site will be your go-to place for the class. Week by week modules will have everything you need for that week, with learning objectives, readings, links to videos, quizzes and assignments.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Summarize core assumptions and tenets of the models covered this term.
2. Describe interventions arising from these models.
3. Demonstrate improved skills in conceptualizing and intervening the couple system by participation in role plays and class exercises.
4. Development of the skills necessary for ongoing assessment and evaluation of treatment process and progress in light of the models being applied.
5. Identify and pursue individualized learning goals to enhance clinical skills, using the deliberate practice model.

The focus will be on practice and on clinical applications. I will also be open to student suggestions about what might be most useful as you increasingly develop your own clinical identities and we as we are presented with the specific issues of clients we are following.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class Participation  25%

This is perhaps the most important requirement, that you come to class prepared with the knowledge needed for the day’s activities and ready to engage in experiential learning.

2. Tests and Quizzes  25%

There will be tests and quizzes along the way, mainly to show to me and yourself that you have the content mastery that will let us learn and apply the skills actively in class. My aim is to have this be a low-stakes, low-anxiety learning experience, so they will be open-book with multiple re-takes allowed.

3. Choose your Own Adventure – Model Exploration  25%

In offering an integrative class, I am committed to the premise that there is no one model that is universally superior to all others. A clinician needs to find a model that is grounded in the evidence of our field, resonates with them and is well-suited to the populations and couples with whom they work. We sometimes find illumination from another model when we are at a stuck place with one we have been using. Though this semester introduces you to several models, there are other well-known and respected models in couple therapy. There are also protocols and approaches developed for addressing particular sub-groups or clinical issues. Papers handed in to me as the professor advance the knowledge of the chosen topic of just the student who wrote the paper and me. Much as I appreciate the continual learning that this has provided me, it is more useful to share with each other as well. So I will ask you to pick from a list of possibilities a topic you would like to explore further. Then you will share what you have learned with us all by posting on Canvas:

- A paper of 7-10 pages
- A PowerPoint presenting the key elements
- A video (fairly easy to do now that we all are Zoom pros) giving key points of the topic you have chosen

4. Deliberate Practice Project and Paper  25%

For this part of the course requirement, you will be creating, using Deliberate Practice model, your own individualized plan to take your clinical work, from
whatever point it currently is, to its next level. Select a target skill that would be the best match for your current learning and professional goals. We will be working through the term to:

1. First define the specific skill or skills (no more than one or two) you think would have the biggest impact on your growth and effectiveness as a clinician, with particular reference to working with couples.
2. Note where you currently are in this skill (assess your baseline).
3. Decide on the kind of drill, practice or focused intention that would promote your greater mastery of this skill.
4. Implement your practice, asking for help and coaching from your supervisor, classmates or trusted others when needed or helpful.
5. Evaluate the outcome of your practice. What were your gains? Do you experience movement? What were the challenges and limits?
6. The final work product will be submitted in the Quiz format, where you will answer questions that indicate your work on the objectives above.

More detailed instructions for all assignments are available on our Canvas site. All assignments should be submitted on Canvas (not emailed to me, as that gets confusing!).

CLASS STRUCTURE

Class time will oriented toward active learning and a somewhat “flipped” classroom. This means that you will need to review some didactics before class so that we can spend much of our class time on working actively with the material.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to the Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>History of Couple Therapy and Current Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence Base of Couple Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to Deliberate Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Course Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gottman Approach to Couple Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TODAY IS CLINICAL INTERVIEW DAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Class will still be held, but asynchronously and online this week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gottman Approach to Couple Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment and Structuring of the Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gottman Approach to Couple Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interventions and Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Body in Couple Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychobiological Approach to Couple Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Psychobiological Approach to Couple Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment and Structuring of the Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Checking in on your Deliberate Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How will YOU work to become a better therapist?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>PAPER/PROJECT ON YOUR MODEL CHOICE DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing of the model explorations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Affirming and Working with Diverse Identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Separation and Divorce I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uncoupling: How Relationships Come Apart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Separation and Divorce II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doherty’s Model of Discernment Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Relationship Enhancement I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cordova’s Model of Marriage Checkup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Relationship Enhancement II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychoeducational Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Course Wrap-Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DELIBERATE PRACTICE PAPERS DUE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

The couple inherently brings together multiple systems. One family therapy saying: “The central struggle of the couple is whose family of origin gets replicated.” We bring our intersectional identities, together with all their embedded assumptions, into our most intimate relationship, with our own often implicit ideas of normal and expectable colliding with our partner’s. Our increasingly multicultural world brings together in the couple system ever more complex dynamics, as diversity of race, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation are present in the microcosm of the dyad. Outside the dyad, systemic forces impact them, creating stresses that impacts them in multiple ways. And the therapist brings into this mix their own intersectional identity, complete with unexamined assumptions and blind spots. We do our work in the context of this complexity.

Among therapeutic orientations, the family systems movement was in a leadership position in critiquing in then-current modes of therapy the lack of recognizing the impact of systems and the role of power. We will be focusing on this throughout the class. The couples we discuss will bring in real-world issues which are shaped by the intersectionality of their identities and their interaction with the wider world. It will also be important that we have a space to explore the impact of the identities we carry into our work with them.

READINGS

Session 1: January 24, 2022

Introduction to the Class


Session 2: January 31, 2022

Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy I

As this particular topic will have a range of levels of previous exposure, I will be individualizing what you will do for the two weeks where we focus on EFT. Those of you who are new to EFT will have the choice of either:
• Attending the workshop offered by the Couples Clinic on Friday, 1/28 and Friday, 2/4 and working with the “new to EFT” group
• Watching the video of the training
This is a great way to learn the overall basics of the model.

Those of you who have attended this workshop already or who have trained in the Couples Clinic will have the choice of either:
• Attending the workshop offered by the Couples Clinic on Friday, 1/28 and Friday, 2/4 and working with the “old hands” group
• Watching the video of the training

A third option, and one I hope you will be utilizing throughout the class is to spend some time going through the online training modules made available to you through psychotherapy.net. See the Canvas site for more information on how to access.

Session 3: February 7, 2022

**Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy II**


Session 4: February 14, 2022

**CLINICAL INTERVIEW DAY: CLASS IS ONLINE and ASYNCHRONOUS!!**

**Gottman Approach to Couple Therapy I**


Today is Clinical Interview Day, so class will be held as an asynchronous online unit. Through its “University Outreach Program,” I have been able to secure some materials that the Gottman Institute offers to licensed professional engaging in training in the Gottman Approach. A portion of this will be assigned for today. This will be didactic material and video of clinical examples, with a test to assess your mastery of the material.
Session 5:  February 21, 2022

**Gottman Approach to Couple Therapy II**

Assigned is continuing with the Gottman training material. This will enable you to work in class on application of the material. There is an exam that will check your understanding of the Gottman material that you will need to pass by class time.

Session 6:  February 28, 2022

**The Body in Couple Therapy: Tatkin’s Psychobiological Approach I**


Session 7:  March 7, 2022

**The Body in Couple Therapy: Tatkin’s Psychobiological Approach II**


Session 8:  March 21, 2022

**Deliberate Practice**


Session 9: March 28, 2022

Sharing the Projects With Each Other

Class presentations of those who want to present during class time. Time during class to view the online projects and report back on key takeaways.

Session 10: April 4, 2022

Affirming and Working With Diverse Identities in Couple Therapy

Required:


Recommended:


This article explores the relatively less written-about issue of what it is like to work when therapists themselves are members of a sexual minority group.

Session 11: April 11, 2022

Separation and Divorce I: Uncoupling/How Relationships Come Apart


Watch my recorded lecture that covers the entire book and Vaughn’s examination of universal patterns in the endings of couple relationships.

Session 12: April 18, 2022

Separation and Divorce II: Doherty’s Model of Discernment Counseling


Session 13: April 25, 2022

Relationship Enhancement: Cordova’s Model of Marriage Checkup

Required:


Marriage Checkup Manual (available on our Canvas site)


Recommended:


Session 14: May 2, 2022

Relationship Enhancement II: Psychoeducational Workshops

Required:


Recommended:


Session 15: May 9, 2022

Course Wrap-Up

Reports on your deliberate practice projects

STATEMENT ON DISABILITIES

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University’s academic integrity policy, to which this class will adhere, can be reviewed at: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/