I. COURSE PURPOSE

The course introduces students to some of the major perspectives in family assessment and treatment through the works of Satir, Minuchin, Haley, and Bowen. The family is viewed as a transactional system within other social systems. Just as the family presents tasks and affective experience to its members, other social systems also influence family members’ systemic dynamics. The “interior” of the family is the crucible in which ego identity and developmental issues are acted out. These can be examined through structure, communication, re-telling of each other’s stories, and the exchanges of meanings and feelings. Through lecture, experiential exercises and work with case material, students will learn to apply theoretical concepts to promote change in thinking and interactional patterns as well as to mobilize environmental support.

II. COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires that students meet 10 core competencies, which are operationalized as practice behaviors. Each course is designed to cover one or more of the ten core competencies and each course is also designed to cover some, but not all of the practice behaviors within a competency. Upon completion of this course, students will able to demonstrate the following practice behaviors within the noted competencies:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors</th>
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| **Competency #1 Professional Identity:** Identify as a clinical social worker & conduct self accordingly. | #1. Social workers demonstrate professional use of self across all practice settings.  
#2. Develop, manage, and maintain therapeutic relationships with clients within the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives. |
| **Competency #2 Ethical Practice:** Apply social work ethical principles to guide clinical practice. | #1. Social workers recognize and manage personal biases in practice settings.  
#2. Social workers recognize and negotiate the complexities that can arise when organizational policies/procedures interact with competing professional standards for ethical social work practice.  
#3. Social workers apply ethical principles through the use of an ethical decision making model that helps in the resolution of an ethical dilemma. |
| **Competency #3 Critical Thinking:** Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. | #1. Social workers engage in reflective practice.  
#2. Social workers evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of multiple theoretical perspectives and differentially apply them to client situations. |
| **Competency #4: Diversity in Practice:** Engage diversity and demonstrate awareness of the complexities regarding identity differences and how they play out in clinical practice. | #1. Social workers use their self-awareness to understand the influence of their personal biases and values in working with others.  
#2. Social workers practice within the context of difference in shaping the life experiences of clients, themselves, and the working alliance. |
<p>| <strong>Competency #6 Research Based Practice:</strong> Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research | #1. Social workers critically evaluate and utilize theoretical models and empirical research methods for the purpose of informing and evaluating social work practice and programs. |
| <strong>Competency #7 Human Behavior:</strong> Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. | #1. Social workers differentially apply theories of human behavior that address the bio-psycho-social-spiritual nature of clients and the social environment to guide social work practice. |
| <strong>Competency #10 Engage, Assess, Intervene,</strong> Engagement: | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Evaluate:</strong></th>
<th>Engage, assess, and intervene with individuals, families, and groups.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social workers:</strong></td>
<td>#1. Use empathy, active listening, and other clinical skills to establish rapport in order to set treatment goals with clients.</td>
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<td>#2. Develop culturally responsive therapeutic relationships.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>#3. Attend to the interpersonal dynamics and contextual factors that both strengthen and potentially threaten the therapeutic alliance.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment:</strong></td>
<td>Social workers:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#1. Use multi-dimensional assessment tools that include bio-psycho-social-spiritual data to assess client’s strengths, capacities, and readiness for change.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>#2. Use differential diagnostic processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention:</strong></td>
<td>Social workers:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#1. Develop, with clients, an intervention plan that incorporates client strengths, capacities, and protective factors.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>#2. Use culturally appropriate clinical techniques for a range of presenting concerns identified in the assessment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>#3. Adapt appropriate intervention strategies based on continuous clinical assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation:</strong></td>
<td>Social Workers:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#1. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions and program implementation and outcomes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>#2. Revise intervention and program implementation plans based on ongoing process and outcome evaluation.</td>
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</table>

### III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS
A. **Required Texts:**
   Boston MA: Allyn & Bacon. [Designated as Nichols]

B. **Recommended Texts:**

C. **Course Assignments**

1. **Attendance and Class Presence/Participation**
   Students are expected to complete all assigned readings, arrive to class on time, and be fully prepared to actively participate in all class exercises and discussions. All clinical content in discussions must be kept confidential, in keeping with the Student Confidentiality Agreement.

   Missing more than two class sessions will result in a significantly reduced grade. The only exceptions are student illness (with doctor’s note), illness of immediate family member, accident/hospitalization, or death of immediate family member. Arriving to class late or leaving early (30 minutes or more) will be considered an absence.
Class participation requires the student to have reviewed the readings in advance, and be fully present and engaged in the material for the entire class meeting. When in class, all pagers, cell phones, and other electronic devices should be turned off or set to silent operation. Computers or tablets should be used in class only for further learning, and not for other purposes.

Students may be called upon to facilitate class discussions, role-plays and other activities as part of their participation grade. There may be other videos and short assignments required throughout the course.

2. Assignment 1: Midterm
There will be an in-class exam in which students will answer essay questions based on the film, “The Squid and The Whale”. The film will be viewed outside of class, and students will come to the exam prepared to develop a treatment plan and intervention for the family in the film based on the models studied in class. Please view the film before the second class as we will refer to it in our studies.

3. Assignment 2: Final Paper
This will be a scholarly paper based on the book, “The Namesake,” by Jhumpa Lahiri. Class members are to choose a group of characters from the novel and interventions from one of the models studied in class. The paper will involve an assessment of the presenting problem(s), a description of three concepts from a theory or model of your choice and their application to this family’s situation, and a description of three techniques from this theory or model with an explanation of how they would be applied in working with this family. This will be a twelve-page, case analysis and will follow the NCSSS guidelines for a scholarly paper. It is to be written in APA style and will include references from the work of one of the theorists we have studied as well as from the readings on attachment, parenting, marital issues, and ethnicity. See attached for the grading matrix for this assignment.

D. Grading Policy
Grades will be based on the CUA Grading Policy as described in the Graduate Announcements. Full credit will not be given for assignments that are submitted late. No credit will be given for assignments submitted after they have been reviewed in class. The assignments described above will be the basis for the final grade. Grades will be based on the extent to which students achieved course objectives as demonstrated by the quality of course assignments and class participation. The following weighting of course assignments will apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</table>
### Grading System

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<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - 69</td>
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#### E. Preparation, Attendance & Participation

Students are required to attend classes and are expected to participate meaningfully in class discussion/exercises and online forums as required. The class participation grade will be determined by the instructor’s perception of the student’s preparation for and contributions to class discussion/activities. Different students will make different kinds of contributions. Some will have an easy time with spontaneous interactions while others will be more comfortable making planned statements about key ideas from the readings or other sources. Both types of contributions are valued.

#### F. Course and Instructor Evaluation

NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at [http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations](http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations) using your CUA username and password. Additionally, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

### IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements ([http://ncsss.cua.edu/courses/index.cfm](http://ncsss.cua.edu/courses/index.cfm)), including scholastic and behavioral requirements.

*NCSSS is committed to creating an open and inclusive learning environment where all members - including students, faculty, administrators, and staff – strive to listen to and learn from one another. We recognize that in a multicultural society, it is inevitable that issues or tensions relative to diversity and different life experiences will arise. It is how we handle these events that matters. Therefore, when such issues occur – inside or outside of the classroom - we agree to engage in respectful and productive discussion with one another until learning is enhanced and understanding is deepened by all involved.*

#### A. Scholastic Expectations
All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and should be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading. A helpful resource is provided below to assist with your professional writing. 

[https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)

B. **Behavioral Requirements:**
   Students are expected to maintain accepted standards of professional conduct and personal integrity in the classroom. Students should:
   - Attend all classes and contribute constructively to the classroom culture
   - Recognize and avoid behavior that jeopardizes the learning/teaching environment of other students or the instructor
   - Demonstrate competence in planning academic activities and in following through on those plans
   - Reasonably respond to and respect others’ reactions to one’s comments or actions in the classroom
   - Use an appropriate level of class time and instructor’s time and attention in and out of class
   - Behave in a manner that is consistent with the ethical principles of the social work profession.

C. **Academic Honesty**
   Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy [here](http://graduatestudies.cua.edu/currentstudents/academintgrt.cfm) and appropriate Program Handbooks.

D. **Confidentiality**
   Each student is expected to adhere to the Confidentiality Agreement that is signed at the beginning of every semester. This agreement covers “practice materials” in classes, supervisory sessions, case conferences, seminars, and other educational settings within the NCSSS BSW or MSW programs are for **professional learning purposes only** and are subject to strict professional standards of confidentiality. These same standards of confidentiality also extend to various forms of written communication and peer consultation.

   Adherence to these standards means all students refrain from communicating beyond the classroom setting about practice material that is presented in class. Students will also refrain from using social media outlets (blogs, twitter, Facebook, etc.) or email to discuss practice settings, program responsibilities and projects with individuals who are not in teaching or supervision roles directly related to the situation.

E. **Accommodations**
Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, you must present that documentation to your instructors and arrange a meeting with as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

V. CLASS SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics and Readings</th>
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| 1     | **Syllabus Review & Introductions**  
“All the Puzzle Pieces: Why Do Family Therapy?”  
Evolution of Family Therapy  
Overview of Family Assessment  
Family Resilience  
Beginning overview of Bowen Family Systems Theory and an introduction to the concept of genograms |

**Required Reading:**  
Nichols, Chapters 1 & 2


**Recommended Reading and Viewings:**  


 Bowen Family Systems Theory
Continued exploration of Bowen Theory and treatment methods.

Required Reading:
Nichols, Chapters 3 & 4


Recommended Reading:


 Structural Family Therapy: The Minuchin School
An introduction to the work of Salvador Minuchin.

Required Reading:
Nichols, Chapter 6


Recommended Reading:

http://lyceumbooks.com/pdf/SW_Practice_w_Families_Chapter_04.pdf-Resilience article
4  **Structural Family Therapy: The Minuchin School**  
Continued examination of structural family therapy methods, and an introduction to the assessment process.

**Required Reading:**  
Nichols, Review Chapter 3 again.


**Recommended Reading:**  

5  **Experiential Family Therapy**  
An introduction to the general concepts with an emphasis on Satir’s family work

**Required Reading:**  
Nichols, Chapter 7, and CBT Family Therapy pages 190-205.)


**Recommended Reading:**  

6  **The Work of Virginia Satir: Family Constellations**  
Continued overview of the work of Virginia Satir and an introduction to the interview process.

**Required Reading:**  
*http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/35409_Chapter4.pdf*   Excellent Chapter on Humanistic Therapy


Recommended Reading:


**Strategic Family Therapy**

An introduction to Jay Haley’s Strategic Family Therapy as well as how to anticipate and facilitate the process of termination.

**Required Reading:**

Nichols, Chapter 5


**Strategic Family Therapy**

A continuation of Strategic Family Therapy methods.

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


http://www.mftlicense.com/pdf/sg_chpt4.pdf Chapter on Strategic

**Mid-Term Exam**

An in-class exam based on the movie The Squid and the Whale.

**Ethnicity, Feminist and Relational Family Therapy**

A look at how family therapy has developed a multicultural and expansive view over the last 25 years.
Required Reading and Viewing:


Watch video, explore the site and be prepared to discuss: www.leadwithlovefilm.com

Recommending Reading:
Nichols, Chapter 10 & 11

http://www.slideshare.net/AdrianaTN/feminist-family-therapy-seminar

11 Attachment & Empathy
How attachment and empathy resulting from interfamily interactions impact on relationships both inside and outside the family constellation.

Required Reading:
Nichols, Chapter 4, pp. 67-69.


http://www.canadiancrc.com/Parental_Alienation_Syndrome_Canada/lampel01df

12 Working with Couples
An exploration of attachment and adult love.

Required Readings:


**Recommended Reading:**


13 **Parenting: Attachment theme, styles of parenting**

**Review of Basic Counseling Skills**
How our own attachment styles influence how we parent.

**Required Readings:**

**Recommending Reading:**
Dinkmeyer, Don, et. al. (1998) Parenting Teenagers- STEP, AGS.


14 **Final Papers Due & Review of Class Content**
Scholarly papers based on the Jhumpg Lahiri’s book *The Namesake* will be turned in, followed by a retrospective of the topics addressed during the semester.
Scholarly Paper Assignment for SSS 821

Your paper will be a scholarly paper about the family from *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri and should be twelve pages.

----Present a description of the presenting problem(s). Who are the family members who present for treatment and what is their storyline?

----Identify the family theory or model you would use with this family. Assess this family using at least three (3) concepts from your chosen theory or model. Name and define each concept and explain how it will be applied to this family.

---Include in your assessment, wherever it is applicable, a discussion of values and ethics, social and cultural diversity, parenting issues, boundaries, hierarchy, power, marital issues, social and economic justice and the quality of social work services.

----Apply at least three (3) techniques from your chosen theory or model of practice. Define them and explain how they would be applied to this family.
Family Therapy References

**BOOKS**


**ARTICLES**


**Satir**


