FRAN 6080 Special Topics in Couple and Family Therapy:
Power Relations and Diversity in Therapy

Course Outline (Fall 2012-Winter 2013)*

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Office    252 MacDonald Hall Annex (CFT Centre)
Office Hours  By appointment
Class Times  8:30 – 11:20 am
             October 1, October 29, November 19 2012

Course Description
This course provides a foundational review of how selected perspectives within the current couple and family therapy (CFT) literature address relationships between culture, privilege and oppression. Culture is defined broadly to include socially constructed dimensions of human diversity (race, social class, ethnicity, gender, disability, etc). The intersection of these various social locations is a major analytic focus for understanding power relations in any particular context. The complexities and contradictions of related discourses in the literature are addressed. Throughout the course participants will engage in critical reflection on their personal experience, values and positioning with respect to diversity and power relations. Attention is given to the translation of knowledge about power relations and about diversity discourses into practice when working as a therapist with clients, and as a colleague with other professionals.

This foundational course which highlights issues of power and diversity more generally is designed to complement others in the CFT area curriculum that provide more detail regarding how specific socially constructed dimensions of diversity (e.g., race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, disability) relate to structural inequalities, family dynamics and the therapy process.

*Format
FRAN 6080 is offered in a unique format that requires ongoing student participation over a two-year period. There are a total of 12 seminars. These include three seminars in fall term and three in the winter term of the student’s first academic year in the CFT Program, followed by the same pattern in the second year.

The rationale for this two-year, four-term format is to maintain a focus on issues of power relations and diversity throughout each person’s training in the CFT Program. Different topics are covered over this two-year period. At the same time some on-going themes related to the course objectives will be pursued. As the course unfolds participants will expand their initial understanding of these themes through dialogue enriched by the new voices of the entering cohort of students.

Registration
Students register for the course at the beginning of the winter term in the second year: January 2013 for students entering Fall 2011 and January 2014 for students entering in Fall 2012.

Relationship of FRAN*6080 to CFT Program Expected Student Learning Outcomes [ESLO] and AAMFT Competencies
This course is designed to promote students’ learning with respect to ESLO and AAMFT Competencies selected from a longer CFT Program list. The ESLO and AAMFT Competencies specific to FRAN*6080 are provided below. For a complete listing of Educational Goals [EG], Expected Student Learning
Outcomes, and AAMFT Competencies, see the CFT Program Student Orientation Manual. The relationship of the particular ESLO that have been designated for FRAN*6080 to Course Objectives and to Required Activities/Projects is indicated in those sections of this outline (see below). The learning outcomes and competencies designated for FRAN*6080 will also be evaluated in other CFT Program courses.

Course Objectives
(See next section for description of each ESLO)

1. To expand knowledge of foundational perspectives on power relations and diversity in therapy. These will include liberal-humanist, structural, and critical post-structural perspectives. [ESLO 4a, ESLO 4b, ESLO 4c]

2. To increase understanding of the construction of multiple and fluid identities and the implications for therapy practice [ESLO 4c].

3. To be attuned, as far as possible, to people’s experience of subjugation and recognize the impact of structural inequalities, marginalization and oppression on family interaction and on the process of therapy. [ESLO 4b, ESLO 4c]

4. To develop ability to reflexively and critically analyze power relations in interactions at the micro-level, including those interactions in which one is a participant. [ESLO 4b]

5. To practice engaging in generative dialogues with others regarding power relations and diversity, including exploring and addressing these topics with those seeking therapy and those providing therapy services. [ESLO 4d]

6. To critically review one’s preferred professional identity (values, intentions, personal ethics) with respect to how this identity reflects one’s understandings about power relations and diversity, including those understandings that relate to the legacy of one’s personal history and those that are related to more recent experiences. [ESLO 4a]

7. To translate all of the above knowledge and understanding into professional practice that promotes social justice and accountability.

Expected Student Learning Outcomes [ESLO] and AAMFT Competencies
The CFT Program Educational Goal that is most thoroughly addressed in this course is:

Educational Goal 4: Social Context and Power Relations. Students will integrate a sophisticated sensitivity to diversity into their professional identity as a couple and family therapist, privileging attention to social location/socio-cultural context and including an understanding of social justice issues and awareness of how direct and systemic marginalization, discrimination, and abuse may impact people’s everyday lives.

What follows are a listing of the four specific ESLO that relate to Educational Goal 4, an indication of how they are incorporated into this course, and the four projects that will be used for their assessment. See section on Projects in this Outline for brief descriptions. For each of the four projects guidelines will be provided that indicate how ESLO will be assessed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Student Learning Outcome [ESLO]</th>
<th>Incorporation and Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4a. Students will critically analyze how their social location, values and beliefs shape their professional identity.</td>
<td>Incorporated through course readings and in-class participation. Assessment: Projects #1, #2, #4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4b. Students will develop abilities to critically and reflexively analyze power relations of a given situation and/or embedded in the construction of knowledge, including attention to one’s own participation in these processes. Incorporated through course readings and in-class participation. Assessment: Projects #1, #2, #3, #4

4c. Students will demonstrate awareness of and sensitivity to multi-dimensional aspects of diversity in the everyday lives of clients, including an ability to explore and articulate with clients the pertinence of potential social location issues on their experience of current concerns for therapy. Incorporated through course readings and in-class participation. Assessment: Projects #1, #2, #3

4d. Students will learn strategies to explore and address issues of diversity, marginalization, discrimination, and abuse in therapy with clients. Incorporated through course readings and in-class participation. Assessment: Projects #1, #2, #3, #4

What follows is a listing of the AAMFT Core Competencies (CC) that have been designated for FRAN*6080. Knowledge related to each designated AAMFT competency will be demonstrated by participation in seminar discussions. Where relevant the graded Project that relates to the competency is indicated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AAMFT CC #</th>
<th>Sub-domain</th>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Demonstration of Knowledge (beyond participation in seminar discussions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1.3</td>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Understand the behavioral health care delivery system, its impact on the services provided and the barriers and disparities in the system.</td>
<td>Project #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1</td>
<td>Perceptual</td>
<td>Recognize contextual and systemic dynamics (e.g., gender, age, socioeconomic status, culture/race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality, religion, larger systems, social context).</td>
<td>Project #1, #2, #3, #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.1</td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>Gather and review intake information, giving balanced attention to individual, family, community, cultural, and contextual factors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.6</td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>Establish and maintain appropriate and productive therapeutic alliances with the clients.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.7</td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>Solicit and use client feedback throughout the therapeutic process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.6</td>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Assess family history and dynamics using a genogram or other assessment instruments.</td>
<td>Project #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.5</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Monitor personal reactions to clients and treatment process, especially in terms of therapeutic behavior, relationship with clients, process for explaining procedures, and outcomes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2</td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>Deliver interventions in a way that is sensitive to special needs of clients (e.g., gender, age, socioeconomic status, culture/race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, personal history, larger systems issues of the client).</td>
<td>Project #2, #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2</td>
<td>Perceptual</td>
<td>Recognize ethical dilemmas in practice setting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.5</td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>Take appropriate action when ethical and legal dilemmas emerge.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.1</td>
<td>Evaluative</td>
<td>Evaluate activities related to ethics, legal issues, and practice standards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluative
Monitor attitudes, personal well being, personal
issues, and personal problems to insure they do
not impact the therapy process adversely or
create vulnerability for misconduct.

Conceptual
Know the extant MFT literature, research, and
evidence-based practice.

Executive
Read current MFT and other professional
literature.

Executive
Critique professional research and assess the
quality of research studies and program evaluation
in the literature.

Evaluative
Evaluate knowledge of current clinical literature
and its application.

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Pedagogical Approach

My intention as course instructor is to promote and support a *learning community* in which class
members (instructor and course participants) contribute positively to each other’s development. A core
assumption is that generative dialogue among community members is an important avenue for learning
that is related to diversity and power relations. Such a dialogue requires attention to creating an
environment that supports ongoing trust and willingness to repair any breaches of trust. In the first
seminar of each academic year the class members will jointly create a vision of what constitutes this
learning community, and the guidelines for practice that are relevant to that vision. At any other point
during the course the instructor or a course participant can request a review of the vision and practices.
Everyone will share responsibility for creating the learning community; as instructor I will have added
responsibility to promote learning for each student in the course while taking into consideration the
needs of the entire group.

The design of this course is based on the idea that understanding the experience of others with respect
to marginalization, privilege and culture and working with them therapeutically is enhanced by exploring
one’s own experiences. The nature and extent of this exploration will be discussed in the first seminar
of each academic year and re-visited at other points in time. Grades for the course will not be
contingent on students disclosing specific personal information. Rather the focus is on the ability to
reflect upon and analyze one’s own experiences and relate these to therapy practice.

**Required Activities (throughout the two years of the course)**

**Reading of Written Texts and Viewing of Audio-visual Texts.**
Participants are expected to actively engage with the texts that have been selected for this course.
Active engagement involves reading and viewing from the perspective of both head and heart; i.e.,
taking a “heartfelt thinking” point of view. Participants are also expected to take a “critical” perspective
when reading and viewing texts. *Guidelines for Critical Reading* will be provided. The intentions of this
activity are: (a) to expand knowledge of foundational discourses in CFT that address power
relations/diversity; (b) to increase knowledge of research literature; and (c) to have conceptual
frameworks that can be transformed into actual practice, and then reflected upon.

**In-class Participation.**
Participants are expected to come to seminar meetings well prepared and ready to bring the results of
their active engagement with the written and audio-visual texts into the seminar dialogue. Some
comments that reflect a critical reading of the texts are expected. The intentions of the in-class dialogue
are: (a) to practice voicing one’s knowledge and perspective regarding power relations and diversity
with colleagues in a way that supports generative dialogue for everyone involved; and (b) to practice
responding to others with generosity, respect for difference and accountability for the effects.

Participants are also expected to actively engage in structured seminar activities that may include: role-
playing, interview practice, reflecting teamwork, etc. The intention of these activities is to provide
opportunities to put into action the ideas that emerge from the reading and discussion of texts.
Course Projects (Fall 2011 – Winter 2012)

NOTE: The second year students have already competed the Fall 2011-Winter 2012 Course Projects. They are included below for information only. First year students will be completing these or similar projects in the Fall 2013 and Winter 2014 terms.

Project #1: “E-dialogues” (Fall 2011).
Groups of two or more students will engage in two separate email exchanges, one early on and one closer to the end of the term. Each student will provide at least 3 posts for each of the two dialogues. The instructor will provide specific topics for each of these dialogues. Reading, viewing videos, or engaging in an experiential activity may be required prior to beginning the dialogue. Guidelines for the “E-dialogues” Project will be provided.

Project #2: “Genogram and Professional Identity” (Winter 2012).
This project will involve both in-class interaction with colleagues and time outside of the class. It has four components: (1) Creating one’s own cultural genogram; a process that involves exploration and analysis of power relations/diversity across generations in one’s family. There will be opportunities in class to discuss this process with colleagues. (2) Connecting one’s genogram exploration to three different perspectives in the CFT field regarding power relations and diversity. (3) Developing a written document outlines a Statement of Intentions for incorporating analysis of power relations and diversity into one’s professional identity and practice with clients and colleagues. (4) Providing reflections on the intentions and some relevant practice examples using either videotaped interview or written format. The course instructor will evaluate only the work related to components (3) and (4). Guidelines for the “Genogram and Professional Identity” Project will be provided.

Course Projects (Fall 2012 – Winter 2013)

Project #3: “Dialogue with Practicing CFT” (Fall 2012).
This project involves two or three students (mix of first and second year) meeting together with a couple and family therapist who is practicing in the community to dialogue about power relations and diversity issues in their professional work. The instructor will provide connections between students and the practicing therapist. The project has three components: (1) Creating a set of questions, prior to the meeting, that will help to initiate and focus the dialogue with the practicing CFT. (2) Actively participating in the dialogue. (3) Dialogue with course instructor regarding the meeting with the practicing CFT. (4) Brief paper regarding analysis of power relations. Guidelines for the “Dialogue with Practicing CFT” Project will be provided.

NOTE: Students may propose an alternative project that meets the same intentions as those indicated in the project Guidelines. If pursuing this option the student is required to meet with the instructor prior to October 15th to discuss the alternative project and come to an agreement about what it will entail.

Project #4: “Presentation of Initiatives” Project (Winter 2013). SECOND YEAR STUDENTS ONLY. This project has three components: (1) Revising and updating the Statement of Intentions document that was developed in Winter 2012 as part of Project #2 noted above. (2) Selecting two instances where, in the student’s judgment, s/he has taken initiative to practice congruently with her/his professional Identity intentions. (3) Presenting a verbal account of these two instances in a course seminar. One week prior to their seminar presentation each student will meet with the instructor to review the accounts they plan to provide. Students will submit their updated Statement of Intentions and brief reflective comments to the instructor after the in-seminar presentation. Guidelines for the “Presentation of Initiatives” Project #4 will be provided.

NOTE: Students may propose an alternative project that meets the same intentions as indicated in the Guidelines for Project #4. They could make a different kind of presentation or they could engage in a project that does not involve a presentation. If pursuing this option the student is required to meet with the instructor prior to January 15th to discuss the alternative project and come to an agreement about what it will entail.
Project #4. “Witnessing Project” (Winter 2013). FIRST YEAR STUDENTS ONLY. This project has two components: (1) Talk with a Second Year Colleague. This activity involves first listening to a second-year colleague talk about the initiative(s) they have taken to practice in a way that is congruent with their intentions for addressing power relations and diversity in their clinical work. Once you have heard about your colleague’s actions ask him/her questions or make comments as a “witness” to their movement in a preferred direction in their professional work. Ask these questions from a position of genuine curiosity and humility. (2) Letter with Comments on Witnessing. This activity involves writing a letter to be sent to the second-year colleague who talked with you (and another first-year student) about their initiative(s) to practice congruently with their intentions for addressing power relations and diversity in their clinical work. More detailed “Guidelines for the Witnessing Project” #4 will be provided.

Required Activities, Graded Course Projects, ESLO, Distribution of Grade, and Due Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Project</th>
<th>Links to ESLOs</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ON-GOING ENGAGEMENT OVER TWO YEAR PERIOD OF COURSE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reading of written texts and viewing of audio-visual texts</td>
<td>4a, 4b, 4c, 4d</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class dialogue and activities</td>
<td>4a, 4b, 4c, 4d</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FALL 2011- WINTER 2012 PROJECTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “E-dialogues”</td>
<td>4a, 4b, 4c, 4d</td>
<td>20 % (10 % each one)</td>
<td>Before last week of Fall term 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Participation in two email dialogues by providing 3 posts for each)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. “Genogram and Professional Identity”</td>
<td>4a, 4b, 4c, 4d</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>Before last week of Winter term 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(One page of Identity Intentions and either an interview or approx. 8 pages typed, double-spaced analysis &amp; reflection)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FALL 2012-WINTER 2013 PROJECTS</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “Dialogue with Practicing CFT”</td>
<td>4b, 4c, 4d</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>Before December 5, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Development of questions; 60-90 minute meeting with practicing CFT; meeting with instructor; 3-5 page analysis of power)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. SECOND YEAR STUDENTS:</td>
<td>4a, 4b, 4d</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>March 29, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Presentation of Initiatives”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March 29, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>(15 minute presentation; 1-2 pages of revised Professional Identity Intentions; 1-2 pages of reflections)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIRST YEAR STUDENTS:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March 29, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Witnessing Project”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening to presentation, interview and 4-5 page letter</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation of Student’s Work
The Instructor will grade work on each of the four projects based on criteria that relate to the Course Objectives and the relevant ESLO. These criteria will be provided in the "guidelines" document for each of the projects.

**Course/Instructor Feedback on and Evaluation of Instructor's Work**

Students are invited to question the instructor and to provide evaluative comments at any point by arranging a time to meet or a phone conversation. They will have an opportunity to provide written informal and anonymous course/instructor evaluation at the end of each or the two fall terms. Formal evaluation of the course and the instructor's work will take place at the end of the winter term of the second academic year the student has participated in the course. The formal evaluation includes both FRAN Department evaluations and CFT Program evaluations that relate to Expected Student Learning Outcomes and AAMFT Core Competencies designated for this course.

**Submission of Written Components for Projects**

Students are asked to submit written components of projects as attachments using email. The instructor will confirm receipt of the emailed document. Students are expected to keep a copy of each written document they submit.

**Late Project Submissions**

The instructor will not accept late project submissions unless the student requests special consideration and this is negotiated in advance of the project due date. Appropriate documentation of the reason for inability to meet specific course requirements may be required.

**Absences and Seminar Participation**

The course design emphasizes collaborative learning among participants. The involvement of each person in the learning community is highly valued. In the unlikely event that a class member is unable to participate, or knows in advance that they will be late, they are expected to leave a message on the instructor’s phone mail (1-519-546-5315) prior to the class. Do not leave a message using email. If a class member has to leave early, s/he is expected to let the instructor know in advance of the seminar meeting.

**Academic Misconduct**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University’s policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar: www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/calendar/genreg.
### Fall 2012 Schedule of Course Topics and Texts (Written and Audio-visual)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>In-Class Topics and Activities</th>
<th>Required Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>Visioning a learning community and creating guidelines for practice</td>
<td>A set of three linked journal articles to be read in sequence:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 19</td>
<td>Resistance in the Post colonial system of relationships</td>
<td>Short documentaries available on web.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Winter 2013 Schedule of Course Topics and Texts (Written and Audio-visual)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>In-Class Topics and Activities</th>
<th>Required Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multicultural identity choices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>Supervisory and Manager-Employee</td>
<td>Markham, L., &amp; Chiu, J. (2011). Exposing operations of power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 25</td>
<td>Course &amp; Instructor Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>