

**PSYC5323 Family Development
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**

Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to give the student a general idea of the content, format, and textbooks used for this class. The professor will submit a full syllabus at the beginning of the class which will contain a course schedule and the instructor's information.

Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Course Purpose, Core Value Focus, and Curriculum Competencies Addressed

The purpose of this course is to provide theological training designed to enhance a student's potential to respond effectively and redemptively to persons struggling with emotional, relational, and/or spiritual problems. With an emphasis on the core value of doctrinal integrity, students will be challenged to see how both personally and in the corporate life of the church body, they can have a part in changing the world through participating in the helping effort as they learn techniques to work with families. This course will specifically address the competencies of interpersonal skills, servant leadership, and spiritual/character formation.

Course Description

In this course the main stages of the family life cycle are studied as a means of understanding the family as a system of human relationships. Developmental stages, family rituals, family crises, psychosocial, spiritual and other variables affecting family development are examined. A framework for the student to provide a therapeutic ministry to families is delineated.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the study, the student will

A. be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of

1. the various stages of the family life cycle by studying and discovering research related to each stage, biblical concepts related to each stage, counseling methodology that is effective for each stage, and how the church can effectively minister to families in each stage.
2. how variables such as divorce, remarriage (blended families) death, alcoholism, and socio-economic background impact and change the family life cycle by responding to case studies.

B. increase skills related to counseling families in different life cycles by

1. analyzing a family situation and responding with a suggested treatment plan for the family.
2. demonstrating the application of theory and a therapy to the specific case situation.

4. interviewing a family in various life cycles to discover common problems and perspectives.

C. increase in their ability to identify personal perceptions about infants, children, adolescents, parenting, and senior citizens that are skewed by personal experience or bias by learning about the needs and experiences of others.

Course Methodologies

Course goals and objectives will be met through a variety of instructional activities. Reading assignments, reading of powerpoint lectures, interviews, research, and case studies will be included.

Textbooks

(Required): How to Avoid Falling In Love with A Jerk, by John Van Epp

(Required): Sacred Marriage, Gary Thomas

(Required): Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child, by John Gottman

(Required): Love is a Choice, by Hemfelt, Minirth, & Meier

Course Requirements

Reading: All assignments in the text books must be completely read. The percentage read will be reported on at the end of the course, on July 29.

Each Family Stage: (there are 6 stages)

Overview and Common Problems and Issues of Each Stage: An overview of each stage is presented, with special attention to the most recent research about physical issues (including brain research) that might impact the family. Additionally, a summary of common counseling issues and problems for each life stage is presented. Read through the overview, and **post an entry in the discussion board about new information you learned, or a question you have about the stage. Return to the discussion board and respond to a post entered by one of your classmates.** The posts need to be substantial, and well thought out...not just a quick comment.

Interview of Family in a specific life cycle. Each student will be assigned **three family stages** and will interview a family in each of those stages to *discover what challenges, issues, and problems* they have encountered (as a family) by the later part of that life stage. For example, if you sign up to interview a Family with Young Children, you would want to interview a family that the oldest child is at least 3 years of age. Use the questions listed under Course Documents for each family stage to discover what problems they faced, what was expected, what was unexpected, did anyone (especially the church) help them prepare for those issues, etc. After the interview, and after you study the Stage Overview and the presentation on Counseling Issues and

Problems for each stage, **identify the similarities and differences between the presentation material and what you learned in your interview. Write a summary of the similarities and**

differences on the Discussion board/Stage #/Similarities and Differences. **Include any previous misconceptions** or bias you might have held about people in this stage of life. (Due Monday 8 am for the week starting study of each stage.) **Sign up for your 3 family stages** under Getting Started section on Blackboard.

Counseling Methodology/Techniques. The student will learn what methodologies and techniques work best with the particular problems faced by families in that specific life stage. Read this segment carefully for each stage.

Biblical concepts and illustrations related to that stage. The student will review biblical concepts related to the problems and issues faced by families in that stage. Note that often the biblical concepts are listed in the format of the issues and problems given for that stage. Read this segment thoughtfully for each stage.

Resource Summary. This segment is to encourage the student to discover helpful resources to prepare for use in clinical/ministerial practice with families in each particular stage. The student will learn about resources which would be helpful to use in a local church or in a counseling practice, either for dealing with the common problem issues or for preventative work used to help families avoid those problems. Students are **invited to add additional resources** they have used or are aware of by listing them, **with a brief summary, on the discussion board.**

Treatment Plan for Case Studies: . The counselor student will be expected to **develop a treatment plan** he/she would recommend (outline format) for the case study family. Please utilize the treatment plan format provided. (Under each stage segment). Students will be expected to use a library (preferably a university library) available in your area, as well as internet resources. Data Bases from the NOBTS library are also excellent resources. Post your treatment plan in the Digital Drop box no later than Saturday 10 pm of the week we studied the stage. Treatment plans will be posted for the whole class to see so you can benefit from the ideas of your class mates.

Course Evaluation:

Reading: 20%

Family Stage Treatment Plans: 40%

Interviews of Families in three assigned life cycles. 15%

Discussion Board Posts 25%

Netiquette: Appropriate Online Behavior

Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on the Discussion Board. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity will be expected at all times in the online environment.