

MFTH 7200: Research in Marriage and Family Therapy
Marriage and Family Therapy Program
Valdosta State University
Spring 2014

Professor: Jennifer Lambert-Shute, Ph.D. **Email:** jjshute@valdosta.edu
Office Hours: Monday 12-2 & 5-6, Wednesday 11-1 & 4:15-6:15 or by appointment
Telephone: WK: (229) 245-4323 **Cell:** (229)-269-6110

DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide practitioners with knowledge and skills in research to better inform their clinical practice. Often time's clinicians state that they do not use research articles and do not consider research to be particularly relevant to their work. Additionally, they do not participate or conduct research for the same reasons. Thus, research is mostly conducted by academics. This disconnect between the practitioners and those doing research is a failure for the field. To encourage therapists to engage and participate in research an emphasis will be placed on practitioner research. Practitioner research is research carried out by practitioners for the purpose of advancing their own practice and the field of Family Therapy. Students will be exposed to quantitative and qualitative methods for research design and data analysis for conducting practitioner research in marriage and family therapy. Additionally, students will be engaged in reading, evaluating, and actively participating in research.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Practice from a culturally sensitive lens.
2. Practice from a systemic lens.
3. Be prepared to obtain entry-level employment in mental health agencies.
4. Claim the professional identity of Marriage and Family

The objectives of this course are as follows:

1. To become familiar with what research is (Student Learning Outcome: 3)
2. To become familiar with how to find and access research articles (Student Learning Outcome: 3)
3. To know the ethical and moral responsibilities of being a researcher (Student Learning Outcomes: 3 & 4)
4. To become familiar with qualitative and quantitative research methods (Student Learning Outcome: 3)
5. To become familiar with the methods and skills of interviewing as a research process (Student Learning Outcomes: 2, 3)
6. To become familiar with the essential components of a conducting a research project from conception to presentation and publication (Student Learning Outcomes: 3, 4)
7. To become familiar with effective research in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy (Student Learning Outcomes: 2, 3, 4)
8. To recognize the limitations of research in regards to nontraditional families and families of color (Student Learning Outcome: 1)

ADD HERE/THE COURSE REQUIRMENTS AND ACCREDIATION

REQUIRED TEXTS

Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*, 4th edition. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Course Reader: Selected Articles to be disturbed in class or via Blazeview

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Research Design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Locke, L. F., Silverman, S.J., & Wyrick Spirduso, W. (2004). *Reading and understanding research*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication.
- Sprenkle, D.H. (2002). *Effectiveness research in marriage and family therapy*. Alexandria, VA: The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY: In order to thrive and excel, a culture must hone the rights, safety, dignity, and well-being of all members, no matter their race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, national origin, religious beliefs, or physical as well as cognitive ability. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect in understanding that each individual is unique. To the extent possible and appropriate, this course will explore these differences in a safe, positive, and supportive environment.

CHEATING POLICY: Cheating involves violation of integrity and the Academic Code of Ethics. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Using unauthorized notes on an exam, test, or class exercise.**
- **Plagiarizing on a paper or class exercise.**

Definition of Plagiarism:

- 1) you cannot use another writer's exact words without using quotation marks and giving a complete citation, which indicates the source of the quotation such that your reader could locate that quotation in its original context. As a rule of thumb, taking a passage of eight or more words without citation is a violation of federal copyright laws;
 - 2) it is not acceptable to edit or paraphrase another's words and present the revised version as your own work;
 - 3) it is not even acceptable to present another's ideas as your own—even if you use totally different words to express those ideas.
- Taking or procuring or attempting to take or procure an unauthorized copy of a test or exam.
 - Taking or modifying an instructor's grade book.
 - Copying from another student's exam, test, or class exercise.
 - Communicating with others during an exam, test, or exercise.

Whether the student involved is an active participant in the above, or the passive agent to the above, makes no difference. In other words, assisting with and allowing the above to occur is also a violation of the Code of Ethics.

The act of student cheating dishonors the student, the student's peers, the faculty, and the entire academic enterprise. According to the departmental policy on cheating, "faculty feel strongly that academic cheating violates the integrity of the classroom environment." **Also, as outlined in the VSU Student Handbook, students who cheat will receive "a grade of "F" in the course."** Also, the instructor may decide that further action is warranted, and the case may "be referred to the Dean of Students where [more severe] official charges may be drawn up." Students should consult with the instructor if there are any questions regarding academic honesty or dishonesty.

ACCOMODATIONS: Valdosta State University complies fully with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you believe that you are covered under this act, and if you have need for special arrangements to allow you to meet the requirements of this course, please contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in the Farber Hall. The phone numbers are 245-

2498 (V/VP) and 219-1348 (TTY). Also, please discuss this need with the instructor at the time of the first class.

SUCCESS CENTER: The Student Success Center (SSC) at Valdosta State University is located in Langdale Residence Hall and is available to all students. We provide free professional academic advising, peer tutoring in core curriculum courses, and campus job information in one location. We strongly encourage students to make use of our services. Phone number 229-333-7570 and email is ssc@valdosta.edu.

ASSIGNMENT POLICY: All assignments are expected to be turned in on time. If an assignment is not submitted on time the most points you can receive is 98%. If the assignment is not turned in by the end of the day it is due, the most point you can receive is 95%. Then for every day the assignment is late, an additional **5%** points will be deducted. All exams, quizzes and assignments unless stated otherwise are due via Blazeview. If the document is not submitted on time as outlined in the syllabus or in a format that can be read by the instructor or if the attached is blank then this is considered late and thus will not be accepted. In addition, the excuse of Blazeview not working will also not be taken into consideration. Example: if an assignment is due on Monday at 9am and a student turns in a perfect paper on Monday at 5pm, the student can only receive at most 98% on this assignment since the paper was later, even though it was a perfect paper. Second Example: if an assignment is due Monday at 9am and the student submits the assignment on Tuesday at 8am. The student has a perfect paper; however, the most the student can receive for this assignment is 90%. If you have any questions about this policy, please make an appointment.

BLAZEVIEW VISTA: Students are expected to be familiar and proficient with the Blazeview Vista software. Blazeview will be used in this class to enhance the overall class. We will use Blazeview to obtain articles, additional information about assignments, hold class discussions, submit assignments, take exams, and watch videos. Each student is responsible for ensuring that you have the most current information and assignments. To ensure you are up to date, check the site often and check for announcements. I will often use the announcements versus sending email. Not knowing about these announcements does not qualify as an excuse. Do not use the Blazeview email system to contact me. You should instead use jjshute@valdosta.edu

LIBRARY: Students are expected to be proficient in using the library system to obtain resources for papers. If you are unfamiliar or need a refresher, you can schedule a consultation. Consultations are designed for in-depth or difficult research beyond what is typically possible at the Reference Desk. It provides VSU students, faculty and staff with the opportunity to work one-on-one with a member of Odum Library's Reference team. At a consultation, you have opportunities for uninterrupted, focused sessions, training in advanced search techniques for specific electronic databases, in-depth discussion of your specific research needs, learning how and where to access appropriate databases, building skills in interpreting citations, and exploring various options for obtaining library materials. To make an appointment with a Reference Librarian, phone (229) 333-7149 or use their website <http://www.valdosta.edu/library/forms/consult.php>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading: The expectation is for each student to have read all the assigned readings prior to class. I expect each student to be able to discuss the readings and have them available the day of class. Not having the readings or not be able to discuss them will result in a lower grade.

CITI Course in “The Protection of Human Research Subjects”: Each student is expected to pass all sections of the IRB. If a student does not pass this course they will not be allowed to participate in

the research project for this class and will consequently, face falling these assignments. CITI is a web based training program in human research subject's protections. In the training each student will complete each learning module which includes text and a quiz. You MUST complete the first module required by your institution prior to accessing the next module. As you complete modules the next module in the sequence will become available. After all required modules are complete the Optional modules will become available for you to review. The software will track your progress through the course. The Grade Book will provide a list of the modules you have completed and those remaining to complete your required course of instruction. When all required modules have been completed with a "passing" aggregate score a link to the Completion Report will appear at the bottom of the Grade book Page. Your institutional training coordinator or compliance officer will automatically be sent a copy of the Completion Report by email. The completion report must be submitted to blazeview by the due date, see below. For directions on how to find, register, and complete CITI training please click on the following link. <http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/graduate-school/research/office-of-sponsored-programs-research-administration/documents/citi-instructions-2013.pdf>

After you complete the CITI please print a copy of your completion report. Bring a hardcopy of this report to class the day it is due (see class schedule).

Assignments Related to Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research (9 x 5pts= 45pts)

Several homework assignments will be given to help students better understand how to evaluate research and understand research concepts. Each assignment will be given during class and will be due at the beginning of the class (hardcopy). Please see blazeview for exact assignments and due dates. Due to the nature of these assignments late submissions will not be accepted.

Assignments:

- Identify an research article
- Identify the type of research
- Identify & evaluate sample
- Identify & evaluate measurement
- Identify validity and reliability
- Identify credibility, dependability, and transferability
- Evaluate an articles as viable or not for use in a clinical practice

Evaluation of Quantitative & Qualitative Research Exams (30pts total, 15pts for each exam): The goal of this assignment is to evaluate your ability to review a quantitative and qualitative research article. Over the course of the semester each of the areas which will be on this assignment have been discussed in class and thus should be research concepts you are familiar.

Becoming an Effective Interviewer (20pts total):

Dr. Chenail has stated that "Interviewing has become a widely used means for data generation in qualitative research. It is also a popular approach for counselors and therapists in their qualitative research projects. A major reason qualitative research-style interviewing is a favored technique with researching clinicians is that it is so similar to the way in which counselors and therapists interact with their clients in therapy sessions." (1997, p. 1). Thus, helping Masters level students learn how to become qualitative interviews can assist them in also becoming better clinicians and vice versa. With this in mind, students will be expected to do several exercises to hone their skills as qualitative interviewers. The exercises listed below were adapted from Dr. Chenail's (1997) article "Interviewing Exercises: Lessons from Family Therapy".

Exercise 1 & 2 (10pts each): Live Supervised interviewing; a trademark of family therapy education and training is live supervision. In live supervision, supervisors are present with the therapists as a therapy session occurs in real-time. Doing supervision in this way allows training therapists to receive immediate feedback on their work and provide supervisor/team suggestions.

In this exercise students will be placed into teams. Over the course of a three hour class each student will be an interviewee and part of the team behind the mirror with the supervisor. Each interviewee will practice conducting an interview. During this time the team and supervisor will watch the interview and at the half point an intersession break will occur. During this break the team and supervisor can review the interview as it has been unfolding, offer suggestions or corrections, and allow the interviewee to catch his or her breath. After each team has completed their live supervision interview, each student will be expected to provide a short reflection of their experience. The reflection should include an overall discussion of your experience in doing the interview, strengths and weakness as an interviewer, and offer suggestions to improve your interviewing skills. ***The reflections will be will be a brief verbal presentation immediately after you have completed the exercise.***

Research Group Project (100 pts. total): Each student will learn how to develop research questions, methods, analysis, and results which follow a qualitative or quantitative methodology. The research project will accumulate in a poster which will be presented at a regional conference.

Each student can decide to work individually, in pairs or in a group of three or four. Together we create a proposal for the research project in which data can be generated and analyzed by the end of the semester. This project can be quantitative or qualitative and will need to include a current literature search, collection of data, analysis of data, and the creation of a poster. Additionally, each project will have to be approved by The Institutional Review Board (IRB) before data can be collected. The regional conference will be hosted by the Marriage and Family Therapy Program and held at Valdosta. ***The date of the conference will be announced as soon as possible. The conference will be on a Friday or Saturday near the end of the semester. If you cannot attend you will not be able to earn points for the poster presentation part of this project.***

Essential Elements of the Research Project: For specific instructions for each element see blazeview

- Proposal (5pts)
- Literature Search (10pts)
- Measurement or Interview guide to be used for data collection (10pts)
- IRB (15pts)
- Data Collection (10pts)
- Analysis of Data (10pts)
- Poster (40pts)

Poster Presentation (40pts): Each group will have to submit a proposal for their poster presentation to a regional conference. **Submit to Blazeview.** Each group member is expected to participate at the conference. The poster should include all the necessary ingredients that a poster presented at a national conference would include:

- Introduction
- Purpose statement
- Literature review
- Method section which includes information about the participants and the methodology utilized
- Findings

Continued on next page

- Discussion which should include clinical implications and future research
- A visual presentation
- Handouts
- Oral presentation

Point Break Down

Interview Exercises	20pts: 10%	A = 90% to 100% of possible points
Research Group Project	100pts 52%	B = 80% to 89% of possible points
Exercises	45pts: 23%	C = 70% to 79% of possible points
Exams	30pts: 15%	D = 60% to 69% of possible point
Total Points	195pts: 100%	F = 59% and below of possible points

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS : Bring Readings to class
Schedule is tentative and subject to change		
1/13	Introduction to Research What is research? Limitations of Research	Articles: Pyrczak Ch. 1, Schwartz Homework 1: Bring in a MFT research article (Hardcopy to class) Homework 2: Completed in Class
1/20	Martin Luther King	No class
1/27	Developing a Research Project	Readings: Seidman (pp. 25-29), Creswell pp. 20-33, & Creswell pp. (73-86) Due: Literature Search (Hardcopy, bring to class) Due Measurement or Interview guide due for data collection: (Hardcopy, Bring to class) Due: Proposal (Hardcopy, bring to class) Due: CITI (Hardcopy, bring to class) Proposals Second Try Completed in Class
2/3	What is Qualitative Research? Interview as a Method, Creating an Interview Guide for Research	Readings: Article Wright, Seidman, Ch. 1 & 2 Due: Homework 3 (Hardcopy to class)
2/10	Exercise 1: Meet at FamilyWorks, Groups 1 & 2	Exercise 1: Half the Class meets at FamilyWorks Readings: Seidman Ch. 4 & 5, sample IRB (see blazeview) Due: IRB (Blazeview)
2/17	Exercise 1: Meet at FamilyWorks Groups 3 & 4	Exercise 1: Other Half of Class meets at FamilyWorks Readings: Seidman Ch. 9: Ethics Due: IRB Final to me by 2/17 by 9am/Hardcopy
2/24	Type of Qualitative Research Methods Evaluating Qualitative Research: Trustworthiness and Credibility	Readings: Articles: Wright, Morrissey Homework 4: Completed in Class
3/3	In class Practice Test: Evaluating qualitative Research Review for Exam 1	Readings: Helmeke Due: Homework 5 (Hardcopy to class) Research Project: Identify and verify research participants
3/3	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	Midterm
3/10	Exercise 2: Meet at FamilyWorks, Groups 1 & 2	Readings: Seidman Ch. 6 & 7 Due: Exam 1 (Hardcopy to my mailbox by 2pm) Research Project: Started Interviewing or collecting data
3/17	No Class	Spring Break
3/24	Exercise 2: Meet at FamilyWorks Groups 3 & 4	Research project: Completed Introduction & Literature Review Sections of the Poster
3/31	What is Quantitative Research Start Evaluating Quantitative Research: Sample	Reading: Gall (pp. 215-231) & (pp. 231-241) Homework 6: Completed in class
4/7	Evaluating Quantitative Research: Instrumentation Reliability & Validity	Readings: Neuman (pp. 112-117) & (pp. 118-119) Due: Homework 7 (Hardcopy to class) Homework 8: Completed in class
4/14	Qualitative Analysis and Analyzing your Data Finish Analysis & A Review Essential Elements for a Poster Presentation	Article: Howe Due: Data Collection: Transcripts completed or Data entered (Hardcopy due to class)
4/19	In class Practice Test: Evaluating Quantitative Research	Reading: Cloutier Due: Homework 9 (Hardcopy to class) Due: Analysis of Data (Submit to blazeview)
4/28	Meet with Research Teams Quantitative and Qualitative Program Evaluation Focus Groups	Due Draft of Poster: (Submit to blazeview) Chapter: Piercy
5/5	Last Day of Class	Due: Exam 2 (Hardcopy to my mailbox by 2pm) Poster Presentation
Subject to change		

Additional Readings

- Allen, K. R., & Baber, K. M. (1992). Ethical and epistemological tensions in applying a postmodern perspective to feminist research. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 16(1), 1-15.
- Anfara, V. A. Jr, Brown, K.M., & Manigone, T. L. (2002). Qualitative Analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher*, 28-38.
- Chell, E. (1998). Critical Incident technique. In G. Symon, & C. Cassell (Eds.), *Qualitative methods and analysis in organized research: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K. (1989). *The Research Act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods (3rd edition)*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Dillman, D.A.(1978). *Mail and telephone surveys: The total design method*. New York: Wiley-Interscience.
- Dillman, D.A., Tortora, R.D., & Bowker, D. (1998). Principles for constructing web surveys. Retrieved Feb, 2003, from <http://survey.sesrc.wsu.edu/dillman/papers/websurveyppr.pdf>.
- Firestone, W. A. (1987). Meaning in method: The rhetoric of quantitative and qualitative research. *Educational Researcher*, 16, 16-21.
- Flanagan, J.C. (1949). *Critical requirements for research personnel*. Pittsburgh: American Institute for Research.
- Flanagan, J. C. (1954). The critical incident technique. *Psychological Bulletin*, 51, 327-358.
- Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Helmerson, H., & Mattsson, J. (2001). Demonstrating Pertex: A new method for improving text interpretation. *Field Methods*, 13, 115-136.
- Koch, T. (1994). Establishing rigor in qualitative research: The decision trail. *Journal of Applied Nursing*, 19, 976-986
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in Education* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (3rd ed.)* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Rodgers, B.L., & Cowles, K. V. (1993). The qualitative research audit trail: A complex collection of documentation. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 16,219-226.
- Rossmann, G. B. & Rallis, S. F. (1998). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Schaefer, D. R., & Dillman, D. A. (1998). Development of a standard e-mail methodology: Results of an experiment. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 62, 378-397.
- Seidman, I.E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research*. New York: Columbia University, Teachers College Press.
- Strauss, A.L., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Symon, G. & Cassell, C. (1998). *Qualitative methods and analysis in organized research: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.