

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.

COURSE SYLLABUS

EDCO 836

PREMARITAL & MARITAL ISSUES IN PASTORAL COUNSELING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course studies issues that affect the relationship and decision to marry in premarital counseling, as well as problematic factors in marriage such as marital distress and dissolution. Factors central to marital enrichment, renewal, stability, growth, and health are addressed by marriage theories and intervention strategies.

RATIONALE

Counselors must understand the impact of a complex and sin-oriented society on marriage. Special knowledge and skills are necessary to understand the wide-range issues and roots of marital issues and how to meet the challenges facing couples in dating, engagement, and marital seasons of life. This course is designed to equip counselors in the clinical literature with application to couples using a lens of a biblical worldview.

I. PREREQUISITE

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

Disclaimer: The above resources provide information consistent with the latest research regarding the subject area. Liberty University does not necessarily endorse specific personal, religious, philosophical, or political positions found in these resources.

III. RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Carder, D., & Jaenicke, D. (2008). *Torn asunder: Recovering from extramarital affairs* (3rd ed.). Chicago, IL: Moody Press. ISBN: 9780802471352.

Olsen, D., & Stephens, D. (2011). *The couple's survival workbook*. Oakland, CA: Echo Point Books & Media. ISBN: 9780963878410.

IV. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Microsoft Office

V. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Compare worldviews of marriage from a biblical worldview.
- B. Appraise and describe how contemporary socio-cultural perspectives of cohabitation, separation/divorce, and gender impact marriage.
- C. Appraise how issues such as substance abuse, infidelity, sexual deviances and addictions, and domestic violence.
- D. Identify, evaluate, and analyze generational relational issues that impact functioning for a couple system preparing for and in marriage with considerations of biblical principles.
- E. Assess marital functioning and identify goals for counseling premarital and marital issues using interview, tests and measures, and theoretical conceptualization.
- F. Compare and contrast current church ministry and organizational programs intended to strengthen marriage.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations
- B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

- C. Discussion Board Forums (8)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to provide a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. This course utilizes Discussion Board Forums to submit all of the assignments so that each student can learn from his or her peers. Each Discussion Board Forum has its own unique requirements for length and citations.

Biblical Worldview Forum

The student will compare a biblical worldview of marriage to other worldviews on marriage. Each thread must be at least 400 words and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words.

“Out of the Box” Premarital or Marital Enrichment Program Forum

Each student will review one “out of the box” premarital (e.g., PREPARE, Before I Do, Saving Your Marriage Before it Starts) or marital enrichment program (e.g., ENRICH) that can be used in the church to prepare and strengthen marriages. The student will create a 900-word review and critique of the program. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words.

Relational Conflict Forum

Each student will write a 500-word response to a clinical vignette on relational conflict. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words.

Annotated Bibliography on Aggressions/Substance Abuse Forum

The student will post an annotated bibliography of scholarly articles on how aggression or substance abuse impacts marital functioning, divorce, or stepfamilies. Each student needs to find 5 scholarly articles written within the last 5 years on the noted topics. A brief synopsis is to be written on each scholarly article. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words.

Annotated Bibliography on Sexual Issues/Disorders Forum

The student will post an annotated bibliography of scholarly articles on how sexual issues (including sex addiction) or sexual disorders impact marital functioning. Each student needs to find 5 scholarly articles written within the last 5 years on the noted topics. A brief synopsis is to be written on each scholarly article. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words.

Particular Psychopathology Forum

Each student will write a 500-word response to a clinical vignette on how particular psychopathology (other than substance abuse or sexual issue) impacts marital functioning. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words.

Couple Interview Analysis Forum

Each student will have 3 sessions with either a pre-engaged, engaged, or married couple throughout the 8 weeks of this course. Each student will write a 900-word analysis of the couple interviewed. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words.

Annotated Bibliography on Impacts of Marital Functioning Forum

Each student will post an annotated bibliography of scholarly articles on how separation, divorce, or stepfamilies impact(s) marital functioning. Each student needs to find 5 scholarly articles written within the last 5 years on the noted topics. A brief synopsis is to be written on each scholarly article. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be at least 200 words.

VII. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Course Requirements Checklist | 10 |
| Discussion Board Forums (3 at 60 pts ea, 3 at 170 pts ea, 1 at 175 pts, 1 at 135 pts) | 1000 |
| Total | 1010 |

B. Scale

A = 940–1010 A- = 920–939 B+ = 900–919 B = 860–899 B- = 840–859
 C+ = 820–839 C = 780–819 C- = 760–779 D+ = 740–759 D = 700–739
 D- = 680–699 F = 0–679

C. Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is strictly prohibited. See The Graduate Catalog for specific definitions, penalties, and processes concerning Honor Code and FN Policies for reporting.

D. Drop/Add Policies

The student is obliged to follow the drop/add policies identified in the graduate catalog.

E. Student Conduct Policy

The student is expected to conduct himself/herself in a godly and civil manner when addressing the instructor or other students. While good healthy discussion will be expected and encouraged, at no time will personal attacks be tolerated.

F. Communications

Students are expected to communicate in a professional manner at all times with classmates, faculty, or LU employees. Because writing is a limited form of communication, it is more easily misinterpreted than face-to-face. Therefore, written communications should be courteous and well thought out to avoid offense. If any offense is perceived, the offender should be alerted first and privately. Reconciliation is the goal, but if it does not happen, the offended may then involve the instructor. Personal messages are not appropriate for posting in Blackboard. The student's Liberty email account will be used for all email communications. Announcements from the instructor or University may be posted in Blackboard.

G. Dual Relationships

The faculty is responsible to interact with counseling students in a supervisory capacity/role. As such, faculty may provide students professional principles, guidance, and recommendations as it relates to the context of the student-client setting. The faculty is responsible to avoid dual relationships with students such as entering a student-counselor or student-pastor relationship. Thus, the faculty does not provide personal counseling addressing student personal problems. If a faculty member perceives that a student is in need of personal or professional counseling then that faculty member will recommend that the student pursue either pastoral or professional assistance from a counselor in their community.

H. Limits of Confidentiality

In the event of a student's disclosure, either verbally, or in writing, of either threat of serious or foreseeable harm to self or others, abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly or disabled person, or current involvement in criminal activity, the faculty, staff, administrator or supervisor, will take immediate action. This action may include, but is not limited to, immediate notification of appropriate state law enforcement or social services personnel, emergency contacts, and notification of the appropriate program chair or distance learning dean. The incident and action taken will become part of the student's permanent record.

I. Disability Assistance

Residential students with a documented disability may contact the Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) in Green Hall 2668 to make arrangements for academic accommodations. For all disability testing accommodation requests (i.e. quieter environment, extended time, oral testing, etc.) the Testing Center (Green Hall 2700) is the officially designated place for all tests administered outside of the regular classroom.

Online students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online's Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.

COURSE SCHEDULE

EDCO 836

Textbooks: Clinton & Trent, *The Quick Reference Guide to Marriage & Family Counseling* (2009).
 Vernick, *The Emotionally Destructive Marriage* (2013).
 Visher & Visher, *Therapy with Stepfamilies* (1996).
 Weeks & Hof, *Integrative Solutions* (2005).

| MODULE/ WEEK | READING & STUDY | ASSIGNMENTS | POINTS |
|-------------------------|---|---|---------------|
| 1 | Clinton & Trent: select readings 3 presentations | Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1 – Biblical Worldview | 10 0 60 |
| 2 | Clinton & Trent: select readings Vernick: chs. 1–2 Weeks & Hof: chs. 1–2 1 presentations | DB Forum 2 – “Out of the Box” Premarital or Marital Enrichment Program | 135 |
| 3 | Clinton & Trent: select readings Vernick: chs. 3–5 Weeks & Hof: chs. 3–4 1 presentations | DB Forum 3 – Relational Conflict | 60 |
| 4 | Clinton & Trent: select readings Vernick: chs. 6–8 3 presentations | DB Forum 4 – Annotated Bibliography on Aggression/Substance Abuse | 170 |
| 5 | Clinton & Trent: select readings Vernick: chs. 9–10 Weeks & Hof: chs. 6–7, 9 1 presentations | DB Forum 5 – Annotated Bibliography on Sexual Issues/Disorders | 170 |
| 6 | Clinton & Trent: select readings Vernick: chs. 11–13 Weeks & Hof: chs. 5, 8 3 presentations | DB Forum 6 – Particular Psychopathology | 60 |
| 7 | Clinton & Trent: select readings Visher & Visher: chs. 1–4 2 presentations | DB Forum 7 – Couple Interview Analysis | 175 |
| 8 | Clinton & Trent: select readings Visher & Visher: chs. 5–7 5 presentations | DB Forum 8 – Annotated Bibliography on Impacts on Marital Functioning | 170 |
| TOTAL | | | 1010 |

DB = Discussion Board

NOTE: Each course module/week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.