

**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***

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### **EDCO 811**

#### **MARRIAGE COUNSELING**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An in-depth examination and discussion of the major assessment and treatment approaches utilized in marriage and family counseling. Emphasis is placed on the development of practical skills and intervention techniques.

#### **RATIONALE**

There has never been a more dramatic redefinition of marriage and the family than we are currently experiencing today. With high divorce rates and an increasing number of broken homes, marriages today are under spiritual and cultural attack. The 21st century has brought with it a host of challenges fighting for the heart of the traditional family. Yet, research consistently shows that a committed marriage is the foundation for a stable family system. It is therefore critical for counselors, pastors, and marriage and family champions to learn the models, skills, and techniques necessary for helping couples cultivate and maintain healthy marital relationships.

#### **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**

Cloud, H., & Townsend, J. (1999). *Boundaries in marriage*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. ISBN: 9780310243144.

House, H. W. (Ed.). (1990). *Divorce and remarriage: Four Christian views*. Grand Rapids, MI: Intervarsity Press Academic. ISBN: 9780830812837.

McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., & Garcia-Preto, N. (2005). *Ethnicity and family therapy* (3rd. ed.). New York: The Guilford Press. ISBN: 9781593850203.

Sells, J., & Yarhouse., M. (2011). *Counseling couples in conflict: A relational restoration model*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. ISBN: 9780830839254.

**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. Incorporate advanced marriage counseling skills and interventions that are informed by Christian leadership, biblical principles, and relevant empirical research.
- B. Demonstrate appropriate awareness, sensitivity, and cultural competency related to the unique backgrounds of various couples, including faith traditions, spirituality, ethnicity, gender issues, sexuality, and value systems.
- C. Synthesize the diversity of approaches to marriage counseling by describing its major theories and practices and their primary developers and proponents.
- D. Analyze and discuss the merits and limitations of marriage counseling models and methods, and examine them from a theological perspective.
- E. Articulate the family life cycle and developmental changes that impact couples, including lifespan stages, crisis points, healthy and dysfunctional characteristics, and communication and interaction patterns.
- F. Apply appropriate methods, theoretical constructs, effective interventions and biblical principles to couples facing separation, divorce, re marriage and blended family systems.
- G. Evaluate contemporary topics and issues pertinent to marriage counseling by discussing current research in the field, identifying and addressing the influence of cultural heritage, and articulating any related ethical and professional factors.

## VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

A. Textbook readings

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 (4)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to provide a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be at least 500 words based on the module/week's Reading & Study material 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 350 words.

D. Research Paper

1. Research Paper Topic

The student will submit a topic with a 200-word rationale, including at least 5 cited sources, detailing why the topic he/she chose is relevant to marital counseling.

2. Research Paper Outline

The student will submit an outline in current APA format to include at least 10 sources.

3. Research Paper Final

The student will write a 15-page research paper on 1 of several provided marital topics. Five sources must come from peer-reviewed research/journal articles. The paper must integrate biblical, as well as theoretical/clinical, counseling principles; include a title page, abstract, and reference pages (not included in the 10 page requirement); use current APA format; and have at least 10 references from current sources (5 must come from peer-reviewed research/journal articles).

E. Marriage Therapist Interview and Summary

The student will conduct an interview with a licensed marriage therapist/mental health professional, synthesize the interview, and submit a 4-page summary (not including Title Page or References) in current APA format. There are no required references for this assignment; however, any citations listed must be on a separate reference page and in current APA format.

F. Case Study and Management Analyses (2)

The student will read 2 provided case studies and write a detailed summary utilizing the format and structure found in the Case Study and Management Analysis Form. Each Case Study and Management Analysis must be 5 pages (not including Title Page or References); have at least 5 references from current

sources; be written in current APA format; and have at least 2 pages devoted to the integration of the selected theoretical model.

G. Exams (4)

The student will complete 4 open-book/open-notes exams that will consist of 25 multiple choice questions from the required Reading & Study material. Each exam will have a 1-hour and 15-minute time limit.

## VII. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

### A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist		10
Discussion Board Forums	(4 at 50 pts ea)	200
Research Paper		
Topic		20
Outline		30
Final		150
Marriage Therapist Interview and Summary		100
Case Study and Management Analyses	(2 at 150 pts ea)	300
Exams	(4 at 50 pts ea)	200
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1010</b>

### 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

## I. COURSE POLICIES

### A. 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.

### B. Drop/Add Policies

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

### C. 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.

### D. 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.

### **E. 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.

### **F. 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.

### **G. 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](mailto:LUOODAS@liberty.edu) to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at [www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport](http://www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport).

## ***COURSE SCHEDULE***

### **EDCO 811**

Textbooks: Eggerichs, *Love and Respect for a Lifetime* (2010).  
 Gurman, et al. *Clinical Handbook of Couple Therapy* (2015).  
 Mintle, *We Need to Talk: How to Successfully Navigate Conflict* (2015).  
 Thomas, *Sacred Marriage* (2015).

<b>MODULE/ WEEK</b>	<b>READING &amp; STUDY</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<b>1</b>	Eggerichs: chs. 1–3 Gurman et al.: chs. 1–3 Mintle: chs. 1–2 Thomas: chs. 1–2 1 presentation	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1	10 0 50
<b>2</b>	Eggerichs: chs. 4–6 Gurman et al.: chs. 4–5 Mintle: chs. 3–4 Thomas: chs. 3–4 1 presentation 4 websites	Research Paper Topic Exam 1	20 50
<b>3</b>	Eggerichs: chs. 7–9 Gurman et al.: chs. 6–9 Mintle: chs. 5–6 Thomas: chs. 5–6 1 presentation 2 PDFs 4 websites	DB Forum 2 Marriage Therapist Interview and Summary	50 100
<b>4</b>	Eggerichs: chs. 10–12 Gurman et al.: chs. 10–13 Mintle: chs. 7–8 Thomas: chs. 7–8 1 presentation 4 websites	Case Study and Management Analysis 1 Exam 2	150 50
<b>5</b>	Eggerichs: chs. 13–15 Gurman et al.: chs. 14–16 Mintle: chs. 9–10 Thomas: chs. 9–10 1 presentation 3 websites	DB Forum 3 Research Paper Outline	50 30

<b>MODULE/ WEEK</b>	<b>READING &amp; STUDY</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<b>6</b>	Eggerichs: chs. 16–18 Gurman et al.: chs. 17–19 Mintle: chs. 11–12 Thomas: ch. 11 1 presentation 3 websites	Case Study and Management Analysis 2 Exam 3	150 50
<b>7</b>	Eggerichs: chs. 19–21 Gurman et al.: chs. 20–24 Mintle: ch. 13 Thomas: ch. 12 1 presentation 3 websites	DB Forum 4	50
<b>8</b>	Eggerichs: chs. 22–24 Gurman, et al.: chs. 25–26 Mintle: ch. 14 Thomas: ch. 13 1 presentation	Research Paper Final Exam 4	150 50
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1010</b>

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**.