

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

(Preliminary Syllabus: Subject to Revision)

IS 780/MF 780 Senior Seminar/Advanced Family Studies

Spring, 2007, 3 units

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Class meets Wednesday afternoons, Jan. 10 – Apr. 25. Sessions are 1:30 – 4:30 at the beginning of the semester, but later on, presentations will be held at various times each Wednesday afternoon, some sessions ending as late as 5:30 pm.

DESCRIPTION

The Senior Seminar / Advanced Family Studies courses are designed to afford the advanced student the opportunity to integrate key themes of learning around a topic of interest. The main project of the course is to write and present one senior paper. Additional assignments include attendance at other presentations, reading senior seminar papers written by fellow students, and critiquing papers written by fellow students. *The size of the senior seminar paper requires careful planning and consultation with the instructors, who will also serve as chair for presentation sessions.*

Note: During the first part of the course both sections will be together most of the time, though we may split into IF-780 and MF-780 groups for special “help sessions.” When presentations begin, the two classes will be divided into two approximately equal groups. The MF-780 students and some IS-780 students will be in a group led by Delores; the rest of the IS-780 students will be led by Tim.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. (For MFCC students): To become more familiar with the systemic approach to counseling resources and research within the larger systems of community, church, and culture.
2. To explore a topic of personal interest in the family therapy field and to apply one’s findings to practical issues of life and ministry as a counselor.
3. To demonstrate an advanced ability to integrate biblical/theological insights with praxis in the church and/or therapy settings.

4. To achieve a high level of scholarship in written form, in class presentation, and in dialogue with peers and faculty.
5. To help create significant learning experiences for other senior seminar students.
6. (For MFCC students) To explore and present family issues, concerns and approaches that will enhance skills and understanding of family therapy.
7. To make a contribution to the MBBS community by leaving your project on permanent file in the Hiebert Library.

COURSE FORMAT

Starting Jan. 10, IS 780/ MF 780 will meet Wednesdays from 1:30-4:30 PM. Students will be expected to participate in class learning through presentation and critique of both oral and written materials. The course is designed around an interactive seminar learning environment. Early class sessions will focus on scheduling and preparing the senior paper. Student presentations will begin around Feb. 28 (to be arranged). All students are required to read fellow students' senior seminars prior to the class presentation and to attend seminar presentations. Note: depending on class size, adjustments may be made to the number of papers that need to be read and presentations attended. Students missing presentations must arrange for a make-up assignment with the instructors. Exceptions to the attendance policy may be considered because of medical or family emergencies, but all exceptions must be approved by the instructors and the academic dean. Evaluation will be based on written assignments, attendance, and oral presentation. All written work *from therapy students* is expected in the format of the American Psychological Association publication manual, 4th/5th edition. The APA publication manual can be found on reserve at the Hiebert Library. Another option is to purchase an APA template for MS Word entitled *APA Style Helper 3.0*. This may be purchased at www.apa.org/books. All written work *from ministry or theology students* is expected to conform to one of the styles presented in Campbell/Ballou/Slade *Form and Style*, or the SBL standards, also on reserve at the Hiebert Library. **Deadlines for the course are taken seriously because of the intensive nature of the senior seminar project: late assignments will result in loss of one letter grade for each week late, or course fail without extension.** Assignments may be given electronically (MS Word only) to the instructors at dfriesen@mbseminary.edu and/or tgeddert@mbseminary.edu.

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENTS

NOTA BENE: You are STRONGLY encouraged to complete the following 5 assignments by the end of fall semester.

1. Reading Log for Recent Papers (5%). You are required to read five senior seminar papers listed from recent years (on reserve @ Hiebert Library and some available via

Email), and write a short reading log (A paragraph for each paper; 2 pages total for all five). In your log, give some critical interaction with each paper based on the author's thesis, organization, and use of supporting materials. Use this opportunity to gather ideas for how you will construct your own senior seminar paper. For your reading log, you are encouraged to include papers from your program area of study. DUE DATE: Jan. 17 at 5 PM in one of the instructors' mailboxes at MBBS.

Choose any 5:

- Buhler, Jay (2004). *Shame in the Absence of Fathers*.
- Buhler, Marcia (2004). *Life After Death (How couples deal with the death of a child.)*
- Cartney, Tom (1999). *American Individualism and God's Plan for Community*.
- Enomoto, Kazuhiro (1998) *Seek Me and Live! (Christian Duty in the World of Atrocities – Based on a Reflection on the Nanking Massacre)*
- Fast, Sara (2004). *Theological Bridging Between Buddhism and Christianity*.
- James, Lori (2000). *Spiritual Integration in Therapy*.
- Kalmar, Laura (2000). *Turning Our Hearts Towards the Children*.
- Klassen, Randy (1992). *Hearing the Voice of Creation*.
- Penner, Annette (2000). *Sharing Not Only the Gospel, but our Very Lives*.
- Peters, Jeff (2004). *Following Jesus to the Cross: How the Cross Shapes and Defines Discipleship*.
- Thelin, Ruth (1999). *Christ, Chaos, and Kairos*.
- Thiessen, Sachiko (1996). *Home Within: Let the Lost Return*.
- Wiebe, Brian (1999). *Seized with Fear: Barriers and Breakthroughs in the Church*.
- Wooden, Ataloo (1995). *Speak O Lord: The Silence of God in Human Suffering*.

2. Selecting Your Topic (2%). You must clear your selected topic with the instructor BEFORE proceeding with your paper proposal. Once you have selected a topic, make an appointment with the instructor for consultation to ensure feasibility for the senior paper assignment. You may consult via Email or phone. Choose a topic of interest to you with practical implications for therapy or ministry. The topic must not represent a topic you have already used for a major paper in another course. A list of sample topics is available on the reserve shelf of the library in the form of a comprehensive listing of all previous seminar titles. Ask for a "Bibliography of Senior Seminar Papers" at the front desk. COMPLETION DATE: Jan. 17.
3. Seminar Proposal (5%). Each student will prepare a two-page (double spaced) proposal relating to their topic. You are strongly encouraged to complete this before the beginning of spring semester in order to receive feedback from the instructor in preparation for assignment #4. DUE DATE: Jan. 22, 5 PM in one of the instructors' mailboxes at MBBS.

The proposal should include the following:

- issue to be addressed and short statement of problem.
- biblical text(s), along with other biblical and theological resources you will use as the basis for framing your argument.
- major literature relevant to the paper (about 12 entries).

4. Revised Seminar Proposal (3%). Proposal with revisions on the basis of assignment #3, *plus a concise thesis statement of 25-30 words*. DUE DATE: Jan. 24, 5:00 p.m
5. Reading in Family Studies Literature (5%) (For MFCC students only)

Students are expected to read widely in their chosen area. In addition, please browse the following and take careful note of how the authors develop and support their thesis. One paragraph per book is sufficient. DUE DATE: April 4.

- Dym, Barry and Michael L. Glenn (1993) Couples: Exploring and understanding the cycles of intimate relationships. Harper Collins.
- Family Therapy – A medical dictionary, bibliography, and annotated research guide to internet references. Health Publications.
- Imber Black, Evan and Janine Roberts (1993) Rituals for our times: Celebrating, healing and changing our lives and our relationships. Harper.
- L'Abate, Luciano (1998). Family Psychopathology. Guilford.
- Lehan, James (1993). Defiant hope: Spirituality of survivors of family abuse. Westminster/John Knox.
- McGoldrick, Monica, Ed. (1998). Re-visioning family therapy: Race, culture and gender in family therapy. Jossey Bass.
- Mikesell, R., H.D. Lusterman and S. McDaniel (1995). Integrated family therapy: Handbook of family psychology and systems theory. APA.
- Patterson, J., L. Williams, C. Grauf-Grounds, L. Chamow. (1998) Essential Skills in Family therapy. Guilford.
- Piercy, F. P., D.H. Sprenkle, J.L. Wetchler (1996) Family therapy sourcebook. 2nd ed. Jossey Bass.
- Pinsof, W.M., J.M. Gottman, C. I. Notarius, A.S. Gurman, P. Fraenkel Marriage in the 20th century in western civilization: Trends, research, therapy and perspectives.
- Roth, A., Fonagy, P. (1996). What works for whom? A critical review of psychotherapy Research. Guilford. RC480.52.R669 1996.
- Sprenkle, Douglas (2002). Effectiveness Research in Marriage and Family Therapy. AAMFT.

SENIOR PAPER AND RELATED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Senior Seminar Paper (50%). The senior paper is 30 pages, double-spaced. Formatting will conform to the guidelines given under the “course format” section based on degree program. Use 12-point Courier or Times New Roman font with NO text justification. Margins should be 1.5 inches on left, 1 inch on right to facilitate binding for Hiebert Library. The paper is integrative in nature, bringing together theological, biblical, and practical issues around three major sections:
 - A. Analysis of the Issue (30% of length). This section should include a statement of problem that requires resolution via the thesis statement. The analysis section

should locate a “gap” in the literature or practical realm of therapy/ministry experience that necessitates the thesis and its development. This section can include socio-cultural, political, economic, philosophical, theological, psychological, or other literatures. In the past, students have opted to augment this section with case studies, works of art, or even media presentations. The strength of the analysis section will determine the appropriateness and efficacy of the following sections.

- B. **Biblical/Theological Discussion (35% of length).** The senior seminar paper is designed to apply biblical and theological perspectives to real world issues. There are two options for this component of the project. **Exegetical:** Identify one significant biblical text that will be the basis for articulating the central perspective. The passage should not exceed 20 verses (exceptions should be cleared with the professors), and may be complemented with systematic and/or biblical theological text materials in addition to standard exegetical sources (e.g., commentaries, language tools). Exegetical findings should be evaluated in terms of context, both for the immediate scriptural texts, and for the broader teaching of scripture on the topic. **Theological:** Identify the theological perspective that will guide your interpretation of the issue. Articulate the theological framework clearly, developing its biblical basis and taking into account its historical and current formulations
- C. **Integration & Application (35% of length).** This section pulls together the argument around the findings in section B, and extends this discussion into practical application. It is not appropriate to “proof-text” in this section, but rather to shed new light on your topic and related praxis. In this section you might also address issues of your faith tradition if these are relevant to the manner in which you integrate findings and practical application. In this section you will want to answer the reader’s implicit question, “so what?”

REVISIONS: Most students will have to make revisions to the senior seminar paper after presentation, critique, student feedback, etc. A revised and/or corrected paper is given to the instructor for final approval. In addition to the 2 final draft copies noted below, you must submit your final draft either on diskette or email as a file for electronic archives. Please indicate if you are not willing to make your file available to others. If you object, your file will be archived and used only to make hard copies. If you do not object, your paper may be sent to future students wishing to preview what you have written.

SENIOR PAPER DUE DATES:

1. ***Draft copy:*** To peer readers AND instructor **by Feb. 28.**
2. ***Preliminary copy:*** (primary basis for final grade): 3 copies, 1 to the assigned critiquer, 1 to instructor, 1 to library reserve shelf, plus an electronic copy

emailed to the instructor for uploading on the class web site so that other students can read it. **Deadline: March 7.**

3. ***Final copy:*** (for archives): 2 revised copies AFTER presentation is over, 1 unbound to library for storage, 1 copy (bound or unbound) to instructor, **by April 20.** *Failure to turn in final draft by this date may delay graduation.*
2. Senior Seminar Paper Presentation (15%). The presenter needs to prepare a one page abstract of their paper for each person in attendance. The presentation is to be about 10 minutes in duration (15 minutes is the absolute maximum), and should be made from notes as opposed to reading from text. Overhead transparencies or Powerpoint presentations are encouraged, along with visual aids, props, etc. The presentation should clarify and highlight the main argument of the paper, and should include discussion of practical application (from section C). Creativity is strongly encouraged. Past presentations have included food, drama, and multi-media components. The presenter should prepare a one-page synopsis of the paper for the audience, including a basic outline of the paper, a clear indication of thesis statement, and a few key findings. DUE DATE: Dates for presentation will be arranged during the first part of the course. Presentation should begin around Feb. 28. (Note: Early due dates for rough drafts and preliminary copies will be negotiated for those who are to present before March 21.)
3. Senior Paper Critique (10%). Each senior seminar paper will be formally critiqued by one student (8-10 minute oral presentation, 3-4 pages double spaced written report). The critique, as with the paper presentation, should not be read from a text. Each student is required to do one critique of another paper, to be assigned at the outset of class. The critique should consider the adequacy of research, soundness of exegesis, supporting arguments, and practical application of the paper. Issues pertaining to grammar, structure, etc. should not be included. *The critique should be both gracious and incisive.* DUE DATE: Copies of the written critique should be given to the author AND the instructor no less than 24 hours PRIOR to the paper presentation to be critiqued.
4. Reading/Attendance/Participation (5%). As noted above under “course format” Students are to read each others’ senior papers prior to each presentation and to attend and participate in the class presentations. A one-paragraph log for each paper should be turned in for the presenting paper as under assignment #1 under “preparatory assignments.” DUE DATE: Reading log paragraph to be given to instructor in class the day of logged presentations.
5. Peer Reader (5%). Consultation will be formally available to each student from two “peer readers” assigned to each senior paper. Consequently, you will be asked to sign up for two peer reading assignments at the beginning of class. The peer reader will receive a draft copy of the assigned paper on or before the draft copy due date. DUE DATE: The peer reader will give feedback and suggestions for strengthening the draft back to the author no later than March 4 (or earlier for those who critique papers which will be presented prior to March 21). Please write one page describing your

experience of both giving feedback to your classmates and receiving feedback from peer readers.

NOTES ON COLLABORATION

Students are encouraged to ask for help and critical review of the senior paper from their fellow students. In addition, students who wish to collaborate on their senior seminar paper are encouraged to do so. Students might individually present alternative or opposing viewpoints on a common theme, using the presentation time as a forum for debate. Owing to the complexities of this approach, collaborative efforts will have to be cleared with the instructor before the beginning of the spring semester.

SCALE

A = 90-100% Superior

B = 80-89% Expected

C = 70-79% Below Expectations

F = <69% Unacceptable

ACADEMIC POLICIES

MBBS academic policies are described in the *Academic Handbook*, which is updated annually. The *Handbook* includes policies on extensions for incomplete coursework, academic integrity, non-discriminatory language, academic appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with MBBS academic policies and to follow them. Copies of the *Academic Handbook* are available online at www.mbseminary.com/current/handbook.htm, the reception desks at MBBS or through the offices of the Registrar and Academic Dean.